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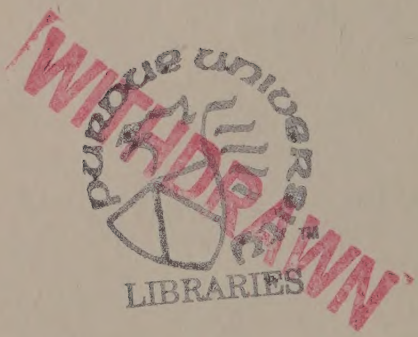

THE PRINCIPLES OF REVOLUTION

A STUDY IN IDEALS

BY

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AUTHOR OF "POLITICAL IDEALS," "GREEK IDEALS," "THE MORALITY OF NATIONS," "THE WORLD OF STATES," ETC.

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PREFACE

NO sensible person desires social chaos: but many persons not altogether devoid of sense desire a change in the constitution of society so radical that it may justly be called revolution. It may be taken for granted, therefore, that no long argument is needed to show that revolution does not mean, and need not involve, social chaos. Indeed, the whole tenor of history would go to prove that social chaos is worse than useless as a preparation for social betterment. It should be understood that chaos and confusion and reckless violence are as much opposed to anything accepted in this book as they are to the feelings of business men. Revolution is an entirely different thing.

This is not an apologia, but an exposition of certain historic ideals, and their application to the circumstances of our own time. Clearly, it may be argued that they have no such application: it may be believed that society is sufficiently well organized or sufficiently progressive towards reform for revolutionary ideals to be unmeaning or even impertinent. To suppose the contrary implies a moral judgment adverse to the main features of our present society; and it must be admitted that such an adverse judgment is accepted as valid in what follows. This, however, does not make the book a propaganda pamphlet. If anyone differs as to the extent of the evils in present society, he may at least find it useful to

consider the attitude of those who disagree with him: for indeed the number of those who condemn the present social structure is great enough to make a considerable force; and whether or not the fact is palatable, it should be recognized to be a fact that social criticism to-day strikes deeper than a mere objection to this or that government, and social ideals to-day aim higher than mere reform. To the opponents of revolutionary change, therefore, the reference to Rousseau and Marx may be some explanation of what they are sometimes told is due to foreign gold or unpatriotic agitators. The forces moving now are too great to be so explained.

On the other hand, the tendency among those who desire revolutionary change is to be impatient of critical thought. Their ideal is too full of emotion. It may, therefore, be useful, from this point of view, to recall the work done by past thinkers who claimed to be revolutionary. This is not simply to look backwards, for indeed the words of these dead prophets are often more vitalizing than the more recent efforts of rhetoricians. At certain times one is inclined to believe that

> Only the dead men know the tunes
> The live world dances to.

None of these great revolutionaries desired violence, and if some of them thought that revolution would, in fact, induce reactionaries to attempt violence, they meant by the revolution they advocated the peaceful introduction of a new social order.

Thus from opposing points of view a use may be found in gathering together and analysing the influences which work, not towards destruction, but towards a new order. These influences come from many different lands; and

the prophets selected for notice here are proof enough that in every part of the civilized Western world men of intelligence and imagination are in revolt against the circumstances into which they have been born. Not even the silliest reactionary can persuade himself that men like Tolstoi are uneducated and unintelligent agitators. Rousseau and Morris were not starving slum-dwellers irritated by their own grievances. Mazzini and Marx have had a definite influence on practical politics. Thus practical genius, fine intelligence, and altruism can be found in the exponents of revolutionary principles. The movement is too widespread, the inspiring leaders too great, for suppression or neglect; and indeed it is only a question of time for the best administrators to offer themselves as servants of the public with a view to radical changes in society.

Whatever view, however, may be held as to the advantage or disadvantage of such changes, the study of revolutionary theories is an essential part of social philosophy, and the analysis of the ideals which promote revolution is an essential part of social history. One charge both reactionary and revolutionary may bring against social history—that it treats serious issues too lightly: and it is true that if one is accustomed to travel in other times, one's own time begins to wear a comic air, and the "great men" of our day appear to be characters out of Aristophanes or Rabelais. But Heaven save us from solemnity! Can anyone take even revolution quite so seriously as the old ladies in Kensington do?

If it is said to be dangerous to call attention to revolution, the reply may be made that the British people are not likely to be inflamed by argument. If, on the contrary, those who hope for revolution are unwilling to be criti-

cized, it may be urged against them that they must be uncertain of their own doctrines. In any case, it should be noted that an ideal is useless unless it can be translated into the terms of definite political and industrial action. It is useless to say that we should socialize the means of production if we have no definite plan for doing it: and generations of preachers have not yet discovered how to apply the Christian ideal to business and to foreign policy. The task of applying principles still remains to be accomplished. In this book all that is attempted is an analysis of principles with a view to their application.

C. D. B.

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The Principles of Revolution

CHAPTER I

ROUSSEAU AND THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

THE Treaties of Peace which found a League of Nations establish the seat of the League in the City of Geneva. That city was Rousseau's birthplace, and to it he dedicated his first great work, the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, for he thought Geneva happily situated in a world of domestic despotism and foreign aggression; and the whole force of his soul was roused by the two great evils of the world—tyranny and war. Therefore he was influenced by a more than filial affection in looking to Geneva.

Some of the evils with which he contended no longer exist. The eighteenth century is hardly to be found now even in Foreign Offices. The world of kings and flunkeys is somewhat blown upon or at least modified into a bourgeois plutocracy with decorative appendages: and the miserable peasantry of Rousseau's day has been freed at least from the more obvious forms of forced labour. Rousseau assisted in the change which has destroyed these old evils, but in many details his ideas are certainly mistaken. His history is fantastic and his psychology inadequate. He had not enough evidence before him as to economic and political facts. His emotions misled

his reason in dealing with some social abuses; and his conceptions of what is desirable in life are often sentimental.

Again, every one knows that Rousseau himself was not an ideal character. Much may be put down to circumstance, but a preacher is felt to weaken his case if he evades too obviously the public service which he advocates: and Rousseau had not that sturdy independence which he believed to be better than the servility of literary gentlemen. These are preliminary obstacles to appreciation of his great power; but they do not destroy his importance as a revolutionary.

An analysis of the relation of Rousseau to our own time would have to treat of his influence, chiefly in education and political thought, throughout the years which separate him from us. It is already almost two centuries, and during that time his work has had more influence than that of any of his contemporaries. Thus the immortality of the man might be seen everywhere in our modern system of government and education; but that would be a purely historical interpretation of the work of a prophet. It is more important for the present purpose that his work can still incite to action; for perhaps the finest quality of such work as Rousseau's is the freshness which it retains for each new generation which reads it. One cannot foretell whether the freshness is immortal, but at any rate it still exists; and therefore Rousseau can be effective to-day to one who reads him, even without a knowledge of the history of his influence. His are books which contain a diagnosis of social life and definite proposals for an alternative to perceived evils. It makes all the difference to us now that the diagnosis reveals some evils from which we feel

ourselves to be suffering, and that the proposals are still attractive, since what is of immediate importance is not what happened long ago, but the present world which we inhabit, and that contains elements which are fundamentally what they were in Rousseau's time. We may find in his work not so much a programme of action as an attitude of mind in which we see our own lives at a new angle : and what we see there is thus often what is shown to us by Rousseau.

His indictment of the social system as he saw it and his vision of a better world—these gave force long ago to his writing : for these expressed the popular discontent and inflamed the popular ideals which made the French Revolution. But Rousseau's new social order did not follow upon that Revolution. Even as he saw it, the new world is still unrealized ; and men now want more than he did : but the fire is the same which smoulders in the heart of successive generations and bursts into flame here and there in a great man's work. His fire, still burning, makes ours fiercer and clearer. Men still hope for a new social order which will eliminate the evils from which they now suffer and establish a life more worth living. That new order appears as a dream, or a vision, and not otherwise than by the light of the flame of enthusiasm which is still kept alive by the ideals of Rousseau. Discounting, therefore, all that may be said against him or his work, enough may be found in them to agitate the world.

His first hatred was directed against social conventions and social standards. The powder and paint of the eighteenth century did not hide from him the squalor it was intended to cover. The elegancies of the drawing-room did not prevent his seeing the rough labour

on which it depended. All men could see the inequalities of the social world, and anyone but a fool must have known that the situation had not always been what it was in the middle of the eighteenth century; but Rousseau had the power to feel, and to make others feel, that the established inequality was evil.

Men have come, it was agreed, after many ages to a stage of civilization from which many derive benefit and of which all are supposed to be proud. We take credit for having appeared so lately upon the earth because our forefathers are dead and cannot make us their debtors. The civilized world of that time seemed far away from the roughness and confusion of barbaric life, if one were in a salon of the eighteenth century; but the end at which men had arrived could be viewed from a new angle. Rousseau found it easy enough to persuade readers already suffering from *ennui* that civilization was a sham. "In the midst of philosophy, humanity, fine manners, and sublime words we have only deceit and triviality in our bearing, honours without virtue, intellect without wisdom, pleasures without happiness." [1] That is the analysis of the *haute monde*; but below and around lay the world in which the majority of men lived—poor, unprivileged and enslaved. If civilization involves all this, it is inexcusable; and Rousseau set himself to discover its causes. We have arrived at this pass, he said, by the institution of *private property*. "The first man who enclosed some land, said 'This is mine,' and found people foolish enough to believe it, was the true founder of civil society. What crimes, what wars, what murders, what wretchedness, and what horrors would not the human race have been saved

[1] *Discours*, p. 196, Vaughan's Edition.

by one who plucked up the stakes and levelled the ditch, and cried to his fellows, 'Beware of listening to this rascal: you are lost if you forget that the earth belongs to no one and its fruits to all.'"[1] But from that first acceptance of selfish isolation we have developed our present institutions, supported by the power of those who gain by them and by the credulity and fear of those, the victims, who are the sources of that very wealth and power. Such is the diagnosis of the evil.

The only solution is a radical transformation of society, basing status and livelihood, not on property, but on the performance of some function. "You reckon on the present order of society, without considering that this order is itself subject to inscrutable changes, and that you can neither foresee nor provide against the revolution which may affect your children. The great become small, the rich poor, the king a commoner. Does Fate strike so seldom that you can count on immunity from her blows? The crisis is approaching, and we are on the edge of a revolution. Who can answer for your fate? What man has made, man may destroy. Nature's characters alone are ineffaceable, and nature makes neither the prince, the rich man, nor the nobleman. This satrap whom you have educated for greatness, what will become of him in his degradation? This farmer of the taxes, who can only live on gold, what will he do in poverty? This haughty fool who cannot use his own hands, who prides himself on what is not really his, what will he do when he is stripped of all? In that day, happy will he be who can give up the rank which is no longer his and be still a man in Fate's despite! Let men praise as they will that conquered monarch

[1] *Discours*, p. 169.

who like a madman would be buried beneath the fragments of his throne; I behold him with scorn; to me he is merely a crown, and when that is gone he is nothing. But he who loses his crown and lives without it is more than a king; from the rank of a king, which may be held by a coward, a villain, or madman, he rises to the rank of a man, a position few can fill. Thus he triumphs over Fortune, he dares to look her in the face; he depends on himself alone, and when he has nothing left to show but himself he is not a nonentity, he is somebody. Better a thousandfold the King of Corinth a schoolmaster at Syracuse than a wretched Tarquin, unable to be anything but a king, or the heir of the ruler of three kingdoms, the sport of all who would scorn his poverty, wandering from court to court in search of help, and finding nothing but insults, for want of knowing any trade but one which he can no longer practise.

"The man and the citizen, whoever he may be, has no property to invest in society but himself; all his other goods belong to society in spite of himself, and when a man is rich, either he does not enjoy his wealth, or the public enjoys it too. In the first case he robs others as well as himself; in the second he gives them nothing. Thus his debt to society is still unpaid, while he only pays with his property. 'But my father was serving society while he was acquiring his wealth.' Just so; he paid his own debt, not yours. You owe more to others than if you had been born with nothing, since you were born under favourable conditions. It is not fair that what one man has done for society should pay another's debt, for since every man owes all that he is, he can only pay his own debt, and no father can transmit to his son any right to be of no use to mankind.

'But,' you say, 'this is just what he does when he leaves me his wealth, the reward of his labour.' The man who eats in idleness what he has not himself earned is a thief, and in my eyes the man who lives on an income paid him by the state for doing nothing differs little from a highwayman who lives on those who travel his way. Outside the pale of society, the solitary, owing nothing to any man, may live as he pleases; but in society either he lives at the cost of others, or he owes them in labour the cost of his keep. There is no exception to this rule. Man in society is bound to work; rich or poor, weak or strong, every idler is a thief." [1]

This passage and others like it have had an immense effect throughout the century following that in which it was written; and we now see its latest commentary in the Constitution of the Russian Soviet Republic, which gives civic rights only to those who work. All work, however, is not regarded by Rousseau as equally good, for he condemns as conventional or corrupting some work, even if it is demanded. For example, the keeping of brothels is generally regarded as unsocial, and a more developed civilization will perhaps regard in the same way the keeping of drinking saloons. The criterion testing the value of the work which alone redeems society and human life is the "simplicity" of the life to which it ministers. Rousseau and his school were accustomed to speak of a return to nature, and in the eighteenth century there was a conventional admiration for the countryside. The majority of the cultured went no further than to put a china figure of a shepherdess upon their mantelpiece; but Rousseau meant something radical by his "return to nature."

[1] *Emile*, p. 157.

He meant the restoration to predominance of those simpler activities, the production of those essential commodities, the service of those plain needs, which were contrasted with the artificial requirements and the unproductive activity of the eighteenth-century gentleman and lady and their servants. Men priding themselves on their culture were incapable of the vigorous and direct action by which alone the new order could be established.

This is not the place to consider Rousseau's scheme for education, but it is clear that the most effective means of transforming the conventions of a decadent age into the fair manners of a new social order would be education. Thus in the *Emile* the intention is to sketch the new process which should form the new and better type of manhood. There is something more, however, than a scheme of reform in Rousseau's treatment of the conventional. There is a fire of enthusiasm which, as Rousseau himself knew, involved a new attitude towards life and society; for he deliberately rejected the cold intellectualism of the eighteenth-century philosophers.

Rousseau has been taken to be the forerunner of Romanticism and of anti-intellectualism. He has, in fact, effected the complete defeat in history of the colourless intellectualism of the eighteenth-century Deists: and his writing is perhaps stronger in the expression of emotion than in the elaboration of a train of reasoning. But as for Romanticism, he must obviously be distinguished in his social theory from the romantic Burke. Romance has so vague a meaning that it may cover both the love of nature and the mere affection for what has been long familiar. Burke stands for the

beauty of ruins: Rousseau for the beauty of rocks. Burke admires what is old, and excuses it, even if it is evil, on the ground of its age. Indeed, he is hardly willing to see what is evil in what is old. Rousseau was never so blind. He cannot be called a romantic at all, if a romantic is a traditionalist: for he was much impressed with the lack of development in the traditional moral emotions and moral enthusiasms of men. It is not that we have a smaller amount of moral enthusiasm than our fathers, but that its forms are still so meagre and primitive. On the other hand, Rousseau is a romantic in the place he gives to emotion. Although we have developed our speech and our knowledge of man and nature, we have hardly advanced in our standards of what is great and good; and our moral practice is a merely inherited collection of primitive habits. Even intellectual advance seemed to have done nothing to elevate the moral standards, and therefore it was to the emotion of admiration, and not to the analysis of facts, that Rousseau looked for the foundation of a better society. As for intellectual ability, he can be shown to have opposed men whose intelligence was greater than his on the insecure ground that the emotions are superior to the intellect. Rousseau had serious lapses in his philosophy: for obviously it is mere nonsense to say that intellect is less valuable than emotion. One might as reasonably compare the eyes with the hands. Each is good in its place, and each helps the other. It is not valid, then, to complain against reasoning because it cannot be a substitute for emotion, or to make a great ado about the limits of the powers of reason.

Nevertheless the gravamen of the charge brought by

Rousseau is only too clear. Those who are devoted to pursuits usually called "intellectual" become in certain circumstances the support of social evils. They are the "hangers-on," the toadies of noble or wealthy non-entities. They allow themselves to be the amusement of patrons, and, worst of all, they are easily bought to use their knowledge and skill for the support of what degrades their fellows. Here were the salons of the eighteenth century, maintained on the degradation of the poor, and in the salons were the wits, the poets, the scientists—some of them sons of the poor—supporting the fabric of inhumanity with the intellectual subtleties of apologists for evil. They may have believed—they certainly made their patrons believe—that painting and music and poetry would disappear if the world of the salon were invaded by the population of the streets. But even if some good things should be lost, the balance of gain was only too clear in the destruction of the old evils.

Intellectualists can be reformers, however, and the corroding power of thought had its part in the French Revolution. The satire of intellectuals could strike keenly at times, and men like Voltaire have many deeds of courage and kindliness to their credit : but they lacked the rage which alone can sweep away the ancient evils. Academic habits breed acquiescence. The life of thought makes some men blind to the bodily sufferings of their fellows. But, Rousseau says, such intellectualism is dust and ashes to be swept aside in the wind of revolution which springs from the love of common men.

It was not, however, possible for Rousseau to stop at this point. The mind might be free, and the intellectuals might be dethroned by a destroying emotion,

but men would still be enslaved. The poverty and wretchedness of the majority of men could not be cured by attacks upon the elegancies of drawing-rooms, and it was becoming plain that the institutions of civil society were themselves at fault. What was wrong, and what was the remedy?

What was wrong was that men were slaves, and those who seemed to dominate were themselves enchained by the efforts to secure their power. Society was a despotism, not simply because monarchs existed, but because common folk had no say in directing the forces on which they were supposed to depend for law and order. It was generally believed that social life was based upon a sort of agreement or "contract," according to which men gave up one thing to get another. Rousseau said that it was at least implied in social acquiescence that common folk should be able to live a humane life. They had left the independence of nature to find liberty in the state, but they had been deluded. They had been persuaded to give up their own will and their power. The only remedy, then, was to restore to the people the direct control of the institutions under which they lived. It is absurd, Rousseau argued, to suppose that the people have transferred their sovereignty to chosen rulers. The people alone is sovereign, and therefore no form of government whatever can be more than a momentary servant of the people. The true life of a society is in the General Will of its members: and this General Will, embodied in institutions, should be the controlling force. This should be the Sovereign.

"But Sovereignty, for the same reason as makes it inalienable, cannot be represented; it lies essentially in the general will, and will does not admit of representation:

it is either the same, or other ; there is no intermediate possibility. The deputies of the people, therefore, are not, and cannot be, its representatives : they are merely its stewards, and can carry through no definitive acts. Every law the people has not ratified in person is null and void—is, in fact, not a law. The people of England regards itself as free ; but it is grossly mistaken ; it is free only during the election of members of parliament. As soon as they are elected, slavery overtakes it, and it is nothing. The use it makes of the short moments of liberty it enjoys shows indeed that it deserves to lose them."

" The idea of representation is modern ; it comes to us from feudal government, from that iniquitous and absurd system which degrades humanity and dishonours the name of man. In ancient republics, and even in monarchies, the people never had representatives ; the word itself was unknown." [1]

This attack on representative government is often referred to as one of Rousseau's great mistakes ; but after the experience of the nineteenth century we may be inclined to go back to Rousseau. Representative government, in fact, has not been popular government. It may be that the method of representation is wrong or inadequate : but it may also be that the whole idea of representatives is wrong, and it is mere futility to accept Burke's apologia for his own papalism as a legitimate political theory.

A representative is a person who, being chosen or accepted by a group, is then free to think out to the best of his ability the actions to be done in their interests. He is thus an elected authority on what is good for other

[1] *Social Contract*, p. 83, Everyman Edition.

people. He is not sent to the Assembly to say what his electors believe, but to say what he believes is good for them. Of course, if they disapprove of what he says, they can replace him in time: but the natural result of the representative system is that the electors transfer to their representative the whole thought for their good. They put on to his shoulders a duty which they should perform for themselves. And thus democracy is destroyed. Rousseau, in effect, says that representative government makes democracy impossible, not because the people are deluded or because they suffer, but because it prevents their bearing their own burdens. Democracy for him was not so much a claim to privilege as a submission to duty: and he held that in a civilized society no man should transfer to another the duty of thinking for himself. It is for this reason mainly that we must go back to direct popular control and smaller units of government.

The further evil which Rousseau saw everywhere was war. That he counted war amongst removable evils is to his credit, especially because most of his predecessors had thought that war was in the nature of things. The "warre of each against all" was, according to Hobbes, the very source of all social life, since man was naturally in conflict with his fellows. The details of that old controversy are not relevant here; but the plain fact is important that Rousseau believed in the primitive sociability of man. The conviction that man is naturally good lies behind Rousseau's indictment of the passions which lead to war: but there is no need to discuss the connection between his idea of primitive society and his conception of war; for it is sufficiently clear that he classes war with tyranny and other evils unessential

to social life. He does not attempt to analyse the practices or the consequences of war. It is regrettable; for the analysis in its essentials would not yet be out of date. But his sentences are sufficiently biting.

"I open books of law and morality; I listen to the learned and the lawyers, and, moved by their penetrating speeches, I deplore the miseries of nature, and am full of admiration for the peace and justice established by civil order. I bless the wisdom in political institutions, and feel satisfied to be a man because I find myself a citizen. Thus instructed in my duties and as to my true happiness, I close the book, leave the class-room, and look round me. I see unfortunate peoples groaning under an iron yoke, the human race trodden underfoot by a handful of oppressors, a famished crowd, overcome with suffering and hunger, whose blood and tears the rich man drinks in peace—everywhere the strong man armed against the weak by the tremendous power of the law. And all this is calmly accepted without resistance. Everywhere the calm of the companions of Ulysses imprisoned in the Cyclop's cave, waiting to be devoured. We must weep and be silent. An eternal veil must cover the terrible vision. But I raise my eyes and look far off. I see fire and flames, deserted fields and sacked towns. Wild men, where are you dragging those unfortunates? I hear a noise of terror: what tumult! what cries! I come nearer, and see a theatre of murders—ten thousand men slain, the dead piled in heaps, the dying crushed under the feet of horses, everywhere death and agony. This, then, is the result of your pacific institutions!" [1]

Again:

[1] *L'Etat de Guerre*, p. 302, Vaughan's Edition.

"Europe is not, like Asia or Africa, an abstract name for peoples who have nothing in common, but a real society, with its own religion, manners and customs, and even its laws, from which none of its people can depart without causing confusion. On the other hand, perpetual quarrels, brigandage, usurpations, revolt, war, murder, daily destroying this venerable home of the learned, this renowned asylum of science and art; our fine speeches and our savage deeds, a religion so mild and an intolerance so deadly, politics wise enough in books but savage in fact, leaders benevolent and peoples wretched, Governments so well organized and bloody wars. Such strange contradictions can hardly be reconciled. The so-called brotherhood of the peoples of Europe seems only a cynic's name for their mutual hatred." [1]

As a remedy he had before him the suggestions of the Abbé de St. Pierre that a League should be founded. This, it was hoped, would initiate "perpetual peace," although Leibniz had said that such peace could only be found in the grave. The project of a League has become so familiar now as to be almost popular; and there is a danger of seeming to speak of very ancient history if we discuss St. Pierre's project now that a League is actually founded. But Rousseau's criticism may still be useful. Such a League is, after all, a superstructure placed upon existing states; and Rousseau was too critical of the state system to believe that it could be a secure foundation for the organization of the peace of the world. It is hardly to be supposed that he could consistently aim at a League of existing states after the destructive criticism applied to them

[1] *Jugement*, p. 368, Vaughan's Edition.

in the *Social Contract*. Rousseau, then, cannot be cited as a follower of St. Pierre or a precursor of Lord Robert Cecil. To take the states of the world and make these instruments of war into the supports of peace might well have seemed as fantastic a policy as the imaginings of the militarist who would arm us to the teeth with a view to securing peace. The state as then—shall we say "as now"?—organized could not be a foundation for peace.

It is known, in fact, that Rousseau completed his suggestions as to local or unitary government in the *Social Contract* by a second treatise on Federation. The treatise is lost, but its guiding idea has survived.[1] The argument runs thus: Granted a reform of government giving direct power to small groups, the relations between these groups would be organized in a series of stages. The organization would be naturally various, and the civilized world would present a network of administrations and governments in which each part was a federation. The world organization would then naturally be a confederation of federal units: and the confederation would be a direct popular construction for certain definite common purposes.

Rousseau is known to be a believer in the small state as opposed to the great: but it should be clear that he preferred the small state only because in it was realized direct democratic power. The essential character of the ideal state was not its small size, but the direct power of the people over the government. States so constituted would form a basis for the organization of peace and the organization would be neither an Alliance nor a federal World-State, but a Confederation. The con-

[1] Vaughan, i. p. 95.

stitution of this Confederation would allow for sovereignty and yet establish a real central power. No one now desires a world-state. The greatest lover of the state would be appalled at the prospect of a world bureaucracy: and most men feel that the state is too large already. The choice lies between a League and a Confederation.

A League is too much like an Alliance to be a security for peace. It implies the predominant power of sovereignty in its constituents, without adequate limitation: and in fact the states as at present constituted in monarchical, representative government are incapable of any organization higher than an alliance. A confederation would destroy that very absoluteness of the governments which is characteristic of existing states. On the other hand, the democratic state, where the people have direct power, naturally evolves towards confederation. Rousseau's ideal state needs the ideal confederation for its security, not because the state is small, but because direct popular government cannot exist if war is possible. The principle of a League or Alliance is separation of the units except for certain purposes; the principle of a confederation is unification of the parts except for certain purposes. This unity is what the world needs.

That is the ideal: but what hope is there of realizing it? Rousseau says of St. Pierre's scheme: "Although the project was good, the means for achieving it reflect the simplicity of the author. He supposed in his innocence that all that was necessary was for a conference to meet, for a treaty to be proposed and signed, and all would be accomplished."[1] But it was clear to Rousseau

[1] *Jugement*, p. 392.

that both monarchs and ministers had every reason to make the League ineffective, and he ends rather pessimistically: "Federations are not established except by revolutions: and if this is essential to their formation, which of us would dare to say whether the European League is to be hoped for or to be feared? It will perhaps do more harm at a blow than it would prevent for centuries."[1]

Such are perhaps the most modern of the many ideas which Rousseau first made current. Their effect may yet be seen in policy and in the modification of social habit which some of us will live to endure or to welcome; but clearly what is most important about the whole matter is that it should be considered. Rousseau may be wrong in some of his suggestions. He is as certainly right in others as anyone can hope to be who speaks of human beings. Man is an unaccountable creature: and the difficulty of political theory and practice is due to the fact that man is at once the material of the art and the instrument of the true artist. Only men themselves can make the life of men happier than it is: and the chief uses of inspiring prophecy like Rousseau's is that it sets men thinking. It changes both the material and the instrument, making the material more tractable in the fire of enthusiasm and the instrument more effective. Rousseau, however, has done his part, and some of the evils against which he protested are gone.

The evils of to-day are not less great. In place of the elegancies of the eighteenth century we have the vulgarities of the twentieth; but we are still controlled by conventions. Men still live, as in Rousseau's day,

[1] *Jugement*, p. 396.

"upon their neighbours' opinions." We are no nearer to those simpler elemental forces which Rousseau called "nature"; for the machinery of life is more various, but life itself is more monotonous and inhuman.

There has been in recent times a cult of what was called the "simple life," and some have said that they were returning to nature, though they went no further than a garden suburb. There is indeed an historian who works on the land, and his wife cuts his hair; and it is bad for the land and his hair. Indeed, unconventionality has become, in a certain small group, a new and more barren convention; but civilization will not be redeemed by men wearing their hair long and girls wearing theirs short, nor even by living on principle with some one else's wife or husband. The enslavement to convention is not so easily broken, either for the few or the many. The mere habits of dress or food or manner are not worth the trouble of a revolt against them.

Meantime, we see the accumulation of wealth in the great cities; ostentation admired by those who have no wealth, and the apeing by each "class" of the class they believe to be above them. When no ideal of character or of life is present to the mind of any society, external glitter is taken as a guide. The incurable idealism of men leads them to believe the best of what appears to be good: and men follow after wealth, not because they are wicked, but because it is the most tangible and generally recognized good. Hence these tears: hence the narrow life of little joys in society, or trivial junketings in time hardly spared from the pursuit of wealth or a bare livelihood. The remedy is radical. The only hope is a transformation of the standards and ideals which govern life: and this will come when

men refuse to work for the ends they now accept as reasonable.

Nothing is more hated by Europeans in touch with African natives than the contentment of the native who lives without wealth and feels no want of it. The native is held to be a sluggard or a degraded animal: and so, in Empires ruled by democracy, he is taxed out of his leisure or skilfully ousted from the lands of his race. The native is not better than ourselves, for his ideal may be as mean: but he at least might shake our confidence in our own ideal. The trouble is to find another. If we could even say that the ideal amount was just so much, and, having that, proceed to live without desiring more, all perhaps would be well. But the problem is not so easily solved. There is no amount which is just enough, for a man's tastes grow. But we can find something which it is our delight to do, and in doing that continue to live. This is to return to the vigour of more simple activities, and to sacrifice, no doubt, something of what popular convention demands. But it is a way to transform normal life. The return to nature in a more detailed meaning is a task for each individual to attempt for himself.

Convention, however, is not the greatest of present evils. The structure, as well as the moral standard, of society is wrong. New evils arise from the vastness of the units of industry and government. Two results follow from this vastness—a lack of control by the common people and a demoralizing of the action of the agents of state and industry. And these are evils the same in kind as those evils of despotism and immorality against which Rousseau inveighed. Proof is hardly needed that the units of industry and government are vast. In

industry we have companies with thousands of shareholders who are generally quite ignorant of the nature of the labour which produces their dividend. Such companies employ many thousands of workers, and these are never in contact with the directors who control their labour. The directors themselves, neither ungenerous nor unwise, are out of touch both with the shareholders and the workers, and generally regard themselves as the servants of the one and the masters of the others. But here we have all the characteristics of autocracy as Rousseau knew it. As for government, the British Empire, partially controlled by the administration in London, covers 11,500,000 square miles, and contains 410,000,000 inhabitants of diverse religion, speech, descent, and colour. To this Empire 800,000 square miles more have been added under the Peace Treaties. The direct control of supreme government is hypothetically vested in about 12,000,000 voters in the United Kingdom. We call this a state, and we call by that name Athens, in Attica, controlling perhaps 100,000 persons—the population of Hull! But how can any group of 410,000,000 fellow-citizens or subjects know one another or keep in touch with all that affects their government? And what shall we say of the millions who are not the white inhabitants of the Empire, and whose sole function in its life seems to be acquiescence?

The United States of North America contain and control about 3,574,000 square miles, with 93,400,000 inhabitants of very diverse traditions and habits of mind. The political control is believed by many to be in the hands of organized party groups, and although there is closer contact between rulers and ruled than

in other countries, political acquiescence and simple passions are more obvious than large political conceptions.

The units of industry and government are larger than they were in Rousseau's day. But why would this be regarded by him as an evil? Because it dehumanizes life and takes from a man the control of his own fate. The apparatus of administration is highly centralized, and the legislature has to deal with an accumulation of material which the common folk cannot be expected to understand even if the ordinary man had time to give to the study of it. Thus men lose all interest in the machine by which they are governed. And the obverse of this evil is equally important. The good sense of the common man cannot in a vast institution permeate the activities of the machine. Legislation and administration are in the hands of the specialist, who is far removed from the complaints of his victims. The agents of all large organizations, moreover, tend to depersonalize their action, to feel themselves to be mechanical instruments of an "interest," and to divest themselves of all those moral feelings which would colour their action as private persons. The directors of a company feel that they must make money for the shareholders: the agents of the state feel that they must maintain the interest of their own state.

Every one knows the dangers of special pleading or of advocacy. A lawyer whose duty it is to defend his client can easily persuade himself that he has no other duty than that defence, whether his client be guilty or not. On the supposition that another advocate will do his best in an opposite sense, our own advocate will always mention only what is to our credit, and deny

or attempt to disprove what is against us. This may result in a rough approximation to the truth in the rarefied atmosphere of a court of justice; but what is the result on the mind of the agent of an interest who adopts the practices of an advocate? He will become dead to the perception of humanity either in the instrument of his action, to whom he gives orders, or in the victims of his policy, who belong to a rival company or state. The shareholders or citizens, meanwhile, in whose interest the action is done, are too far off to know what is done for their sake, and therefore they feel no moral responsibility for it. The result of the vastness of the units, then, is to demoralize large spheres of human action.

If this is the evil of large units, what can we hope for? What will be the characteristic features of the new social order as envisaged by Rousseau? First, it will be simpler than our own, but not in the too obvious sense of a "return to nature." It will be simpler because the more fundamental elements in life will be restored to that predominance which they lose in periods of great wealth and great poverty; and if "nature means greater equality of circumstances, then this will be a return to nature. But the new social order will depend not so much on equalizing external belongings. As Aristotle said, "what is needed is to equalize the desires of men, not their incomes." The security of a man lies in the fact that he has few requirements and is independent of the tastes of others. A man who needs little is not easily disturbed, and one who does not follow other people's fashion can feel happy in choosing his own. In social habits the need for the labour of others to make possible the fine art of the few was the excuse for slavery;

but if Rousseau is right we shall learn to do without what we cannot get except at the cost of slavery. We shall learn to supply for ourselves what we cannot induce others to supply to us for their own delight.

Secondly, the new order will be one in which the forces governing human life are more adequately controlled by the common people. We are now enslaved by the vastness of the state and the complexities of finance, commerce, and manufacture. The forces which give us our meat and our clothing are so far removed from our control that we feel ourselves helpless. And yet there seems no practical possibility of reducing government again to the limits of the small state and of returning to village industries. The forces resulting from invention and discovery inevitably create larger units. If, however, these forces do not cease to operate, their operations must become more intelligible to the common man. In the new order, therefore, Rousseau would say, if he now lived, there must be a complete publicity and a finer public intelligence. The machinery of government and commerce must be based on confidence in the public, and the common man must be educated enough to deserve that confidence. The merely geographical basis of government and industry may, however, also be changed. From Rousseau's doctrine of the small state there is a legitimate development to the Federalism of Paul-Boncour and the Regionalism of Mistral and Charles-Brun.[1] It is seriously proposed now that we should go back to the Region for culture, government, industry, and finance; and that we should have a federation of regions in place

[1] Cf. *Le Régionalisme*, Charles-Brun, and *l'Evolution Regionaliste*, by F. Jean-Desthieux.

of the highly centralized system of government and industry.

Finally, the new social order will displace the god Competition, worshipped by all who tread down their fellows in the race for success or the struggle for a livelihood. It will be no longer possible for the grocer to think that he need not sell good food unless a rival grocer will oust him otherwise. Nor will any man test the value of his work by overcoming another. Indeed, there is no reason why children should be examined singly to see which is best, since every child should help every other in answering the questions asked of each.

The argument, therefore, runs thus: Rousseau saw clearly enough to see some of the evils which still exist; and his large vision of what would be better still remains fresh. But the immediate need is for us to compare our own circumstances, the evil clearly seen, with a better order which is worth our hope. The method of attaining that new order still remains undiscussed: but something is gained if we are certain of what we desire.

The new social order will not be static, nor will it consist in the establishment of a political and industrial organization of a particular kind. It will depend upon the application of our ideal to the solution of various problems. It will, therefore, be distinct from our present order of society chiefly in that the attitude of men will have changed; for all other changes which are worth making are dependent ultimately upon that.

CHAPTER II

KARL MARX AND REVOLUTION

THE books which have moved men to action are very few; but Karl Marx's *Capital* is one of them. Its governing ideas have become the basis for what is almost a religion; and men love or hate the work and influence of Marx with as much frenzy now as men of old loved or hated the founder of a religion. The man himself is becoming a figure of myth. He is presented by some as a proletarian deity, by others as the devil incarnate, and even those educated at our older universities have heard of him. A rumour of his name, as that of a dangerous Hun, has reached the War Office; and doubtless the Home Office has asked the police to be on the look-out lest he might leave his internment at Highgate. But he has somehow escaped the vigilance of governments, and, though long dead, is a more powerful enemy of the established order than many living rhetoricians.

It will please no one if Marx is neither praised nor blamed; but exposition and refutation of his doctrine have been attempted already many times; and therefore the problem now to be considered is the character and quality of his influence in view of the social crises which appear to be approaching, for this dead German (whose economic materialism lies buried at Highgate) has set the world ablaze: he rules in Russia and in

Germany, and there is elsewhere the whisper of his coming.

The very large book which he wrote has led most commentators so completely astray that one hesitates to suggest what seems to be the real reason for its influence. It is on the surface a treatise on economics. For anyone who wishes to refute it, the most barren materialism can be found in it combined with the most futile economic calculus. For a profound admirer, on the other hand, it contains a gospel of social evolution : but its real power seems to be due to the masterly accumulation of damning evidence against the system which the learned and the privileged have conspired to acclaim. No one who reads *Capital* without prejudice can fail to be impressed with the earnest humanity of the writer and with his irrefutable evidence against the industrial system. It may be said that his economic and historical interpretation of the evidence is wrong ; but no one else has yet offered a better interpretation, partly, no doubt, because no one has yet dared to face such evidence.

Secondly, the power of Marx lies in his ability to envisage an alternative to the system he describes. Suppose that the alternative is unrealizable : and yet the many economists who have " refuted " Marx have not yet contrived to imagine a better, partly because they have no imagination at all. Thirdly, the power of Marx is due to the keenness of his reasoning ; for he is usually recognized as the founder of scientific as opposed to sentimental socialism. Suppose, however, that his argument is as confusing as William Morris found it to be ; suppose that his reasoning is mistaken ; it is nevertheless vivid and eager, not the pale, vague, logic-chopping of the economists who have refuted him. There-

fore his power over men has survived all his mistakes and limitations.

All Marxians believe in the three leading ideas of their master: economic materialism, surplus value, and the class war—Amen! But it is unnecessary here to discuss these, except in so far as they involve a criticism of existing society and a conception of a better social order. Economic materialism is misleading if it is taken as the only guide to history, for obviously many changes have been due to ideals which cannot by any legitimate use of words be called materialist. Nevertheless, Marx has been useful in proving that there is an important economic aspect in all social change. The romance of the Middle Ages hides a very sordid economic struggle, and the glory and pomp of history is more misleading than any materialism. As for surplus value, Marx may be wrong in his analysis of supply and demand or his implied belief that the surplus is got for nothing by the small caste of the private owners of capital; but he is not wrong in his belief that the private ownership of capital and the control by the few of the lives of the many is the most important source of social evils at present. His description of that evil is sufficiently biting. Take as an example his statement of the control exercised by private capital over the lives of the workers:

"Time for education, for intellectual development, for the fulfilling of social functions and for social intercourse, for the free play of his bodily and mental activity—moonshine! But in its blind, unrestrainable passion, its werewolf hunger for surplus labour, capital oversteps not only the moral but even the merely physical maximum bounds of the working day.

"It usurps the time for growth, development, and healthy maintainance of the body. It higgles over a mealtime, incorporating it where possible with the process of production itself, so that food is given to the labourer as to a mere means of production, as coal is supplied to the boiler, grease and oil to the machinery. It reduces the sound sleep needed for the restoration, reparation, refreshment of the bodily power to just so many hours of torpor as the revival of an organism, absolutely exhausted, renders essential. It is not the normal maintenance of the labour power which is to determine the limit of the working day; it is the greatest possible daily expenditure of labour power, no matter how diseased, compulsory, and painful it may be, which is to determine the labourers' period of repose. Capital cares nothing for the length of life of labour power. All that concerns it is simply and solely the maximum of labour power that can be rendered fluent in a working day. It attains this end by shortening the extent of the labourers' life, as a greedy farmer snatches increased produce from the soil by robbing it of its fertility. . . . Capital extends the labourer's time of production during a given period by shortening his actual lifetime." [1]

Capital has in the imagination of Marx become a living thing. "Surplus labour population is a necessary product of accumulation or of the development of wealth on a capitalist basis. . . . It forms the disposable industrial reserve army that belongs to capital quite as absolutely as if the latter had bred it at its own cost." [2] Such vivid rendering of the evil would be effective quite apart from the weight of the argument behind it; but the argument itself is effective, not because of its eco-

[1] *Capital*, vol. i. p. 249. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 646.

nomic theory, but because the evidence lending it force is drawn from historical records, official reports, and recognized authorities. Thus the attack of Marx on the existing social system is in fact irresistible, whatever abstract reasoning may refute.

Apart from his economic and historical teaching, his work is associated with the founding of the Workers' International, the development of the Social Democratic Party, and the advocacy of the Class War as a method. All these live on in Europe to-day. There was a strange international of Governments at Paris in a Peace Conference where the international regulation of hours and conditions of labour was discussed; while another, a Socialist international, met at Berne, and another of Trade Unionists at Amsterdam. All these internationals may be traced back to Marx. The Social Democratic Party of Germany now has control of the German peoples; and in Russia the only Government so far proved stable since the Revolution of 1917 is confessedly Marxian. So the man lives in the practical politics of to-day as well as in the ideals of those who desire to transform society.

The method by which the inevitable end of Capitalism was to be achieved was, according to Marx, the Class War. This has come to be thought the revolutionary method *par excellence*, and the phrase terrifies the old ladies more than any other. But in the matter of mere interpretation there has been considerable misunderstanding. First, the Class War is never conceived by Marx to be an end or purpose for action. The revolution for him, as for the other great revolutionaries, is the new social principle working in a radical change of social structure. The most important stage in the revolution, therefore,

is the establishment and organization of a new order; and this is recognized to be a task of high intelligence and much toil, in which the eloquence of agitators is useless. Thus Lenin, a faithful follower of Marx, said in his speech of April, 1918: "The most important and difficult side of the Socialist revolution is the problem of organization." Secondly, the Class War is not an invention of Karl Marx. He simply points out the existence in society of an actual situation which is a class war. The war is being waged, whether we like the phrase or not, so long as the rich and the privileged are grouped against the rest for the preservation of their position. That those who have suffered defeat so far in this war are dumb and unrecognized by historians is no excuse for supposing them to have been willing victims to Output and Wealth. Mr. Hammond has clearly shown how in England the war of the rich against the poor has depopulated the country and degraded the town.[1] What Marx did was to urge the vanquished to unite for a last effort which was to secure victory for them; and that is how he has been understood in the practical policy of the Russian Bolsheviks.

So far the statement of reasons for Marx's influence may be carried, but the enduring character of that influence cannot be understood unless we look for ourselves directly at the problems to which Marx directed attention.

In order to appreciate his influence one must omit the problem of surplus value and omit all disputes as to labour unrest or wicked agitators. It is necessary to look at the facts as they can be seen in any city and in most rural districts. Ninety out of every hundred

[1] *The Village Labourer, the Town Labourer, the Skilled Labourer.*

adults in England are workers with their hands. Most of these are living in districts and in houses which make their free and healthy development difficult if not impossible. Twenty-three out of every hundred live below the poverty line—that is to say, they are so ill-clothed, so badly housed, and so underfed that they die or are racked with premature pains before they are fifty years of age. Their children die like flies in winter. The short and meagre lives of parents and children are a savage hunt for mere food and clothing and shelter, without time or energy for the things of the spirit. Yet these men and women are producing or distributing food, clothing, and the luxuries which they cannot afford to obtain for themselves. This, Marx says, is the "cost of production." This is the result of the ability and enterprise which is "private" and is so often contrasted with the supposed inadequacy of public service. It is true, he would admit, that we have secured production and distribution of a kind: the economic organization in existence has therefore had some good results; but the cost is what is in question. That cost in human life and happiness is too great for us to be satisfied to pay it. "For a full elucidation of the law of accumulation," says Marx, "the condition of the labourer outside the workshop must be looked at, his condition as to food and dwelling."[1] Once men said that civilization could not exist without slaves; now men say that it cannot exist without the poor; but the question then arises whether it is worth while for the majority who suffer to acquiesce at all any longer. If, however, there is already some good in the system, why does Marx believe that the evil cannot be destroyed without a radical

[1] *Capital*, vol. ii. p. 669.

transformation of society? No man, he might argue, is able to say that it is utterly impossible to destroy poverty without destroying private capitalism. Nothing can be called absolutely impossible; but we must judge from the evidence at our disposal, and this shows that nothing but a radical transformation will do. For what is the origin of the evil we have named? If housing is bad, if houses are too few and dilapidated, has not 90 per cent. of the housing been provided by private enterprise? Private enterprise has miserably failed to supply us with beautiful towns and spacious homes; but the building trade cannot be blamed, for those who had to build the houses had to live and so had those who inhabited them. The cost of building a good house could not be borne if the rent were not large; and the rent could not be large because the wages were low. The evil therefore is essential to the system.

Benevolent old gentlemen give money derived from the profits on cheap labour to educate and elevate the labourers. "Aristocracy," as Marx puts it, "waves the proletarian alms-bag in front for a banner." [1] Perhaps the labourers would not elevate themselves if the money were given in wages and not in charity: and the benevolent old gentlemen quite conscientiously believe they are doing what is best. They like the "responsibilities" of wealth; and it is entirely unpractical to argue that the workers would do better for themselves if they were given the money in wages, part of which is kindly offered in charity. It is unpractical to argue thus, because there is no chance of persuading those who control not to control. The only practical solution, therefore, is radical. It is to make it impossible for

[1] *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 23.

them to control: and that is to transform the system of production and distribution.

The alternative which Marx set before his followers was a new and better order in which the production and distribution of commodities would be a social service, organized in the best interests of all members of society. It cannot be better described than in Marx's own words:

"Let us picture a community of free individuals carrying on their work with the means of production in common, in which the labour power of all the different individuals is consciously applied as the combined labour power of the community. . . . The total product of our community is a social product. One portion serves as fresh means of production, and remains social. But another portion is consumed by the members as means of subsistence. A distribution of this portion among them is consequently necessary. The mode of this distribution will vary with the productive organization of the community and the degree of historical development attained by the producers. . . . The social relations of the individual producers, both with regard to their labour and to its products, are in this case perfectly simple and intelligible, both with respect to production and to distribution." [1]

The abstract question of State Socialism as an ideal should nor be an obstacle to the understanding of the main point in the argument. That main point is that the organized community should control economic processes; but in actual life there is no organized community in which public service is recognized as the basis for action except the state. The state, therefore, represents the community in the eyes of the Marxians, and indeed

[1] *Capital*, vol. i. p. 50, Eng. trans.

practically there is no other organized community to which economic services can be committed if it is desired at present to take those services out of the control of private or group interest. Marx was wrong, as Rousseau and Hegel were wrong, in supposing that the state and the community can be identified; for the state is a community organized only for one particular purpose—political order and liberty; and although the other forms of community organization are not so fully developed, probably they will be in the future. On the other hand, Marx was right in supposing that the basis of economic organization should be the idea or sense of public service; for no civilized organization can depend upon the contending interests of groups. The idea of a balance of opposing forces as the true basis for individual liberty and social justice is primitive and mistaken; and if Guild Socialism, as contrasted with State Socialism, implies this balance, it is much worse than State Socialism.

As for the method by which the new control and organization of industry may be attained in our own day and in an elaborate society, in which the new order may be brought into being, the problem, as Marx says, needs careful thought. The word "revolution" has an ill-omened sound to anyone acquainted with the history of the past. It is true that it may mean only a change which is radical and rapid; but it may also mean confusion in which even those whose sufferings demanded revolution have to endure still greater suffering; and we ought to think, not of abstract ruling classes and impoverished masses, but of men and women and children. The change they need must bring to them food and clothing and shelter, and more happiness and freedom of mind; and any change designed thus to increase

happiness by fundamentally transforming the structure of society must be so devised that no collapse or confusion, even accidentally, results. The danger in a revolution does not arise from the intentions of the revolutionaries, but from the unforeseen effects which follow on a radical change of habit and custom; and therefore Marx set himself to analyse the characteristics of industrial society.

We have, indeed, evidence of the danger in an absence of thought or plan. The greatest social transformation of history was undesigned. It followed the downfall of the Roman Empire. Then the powerful were dethroned, the wealthy killed or impoverished, the established order disappeared; and with it went the old daily customs of which the lives of men and women were chiefly composed. The old was bad; but the new was worse. Following on the fifth century of our era, when the sturdy barbarians so admired by our grandfathers were being "converted to Christianity," warlike and murderous enterprises were being followed by famines, and these again by plagues; and it was not until the Roman ideal began to rise out of its grave that civilization was secured. Had the transformation been less radical or more reasoned, less would have been lost, and the results would have been better.

What is needed now is a change radical enough to abolish the familiar and ancient evil of poverty and dependence on the private caprice of others; but the change must not be so radical as to create an occasion for violence and confusion. Unless the change is radical there is no hope of a new world of free men living finely; for patchwork cannot hold the rotten timbers together. There are limits, however, to the change which it is wise

to attempt to establish. We should not confuse the means with the end, and the end is not the mere abolition of the existing order, but the development of a new order in its place. The end, in concrete terms, is the supply and distribution of commodities without the waste of energy and material at present involved; it is the finding of a place for every man in which he can add his best to the common store.

What is needed is not destruction, but a new organization, which, as Marx supposed, will be a natural or inevitable consequence of the old. Capitalism does not, in fact, give birth to co-operative production and distribution, although there may be a change from Private Capitalism to State Capitalism. The fact that the units of economic organization are greater does not change the spirit in which that organization is controlled; and the transference of "big business" to the state may only infect the state with the selfishness and greed which are the evils which Marx found in private capitalists. The state now seems to compare well with private enterprise, at least as far as the motive of its organization and action is concerned; but State Socialism may only mean that the state itself is degraded to the moral level of what is most objectionable in business. Even the state may be run to pay.

This, however, is not what Marx intended. He saw that as capitalist organization grew larger a greater number of persons became producers without control and a smaller number held always more control. He argued, therefore, that the next step inevitably would be that the organizers as well as the other producers would take over the control from the functionless few. His state was the industrial community.

The Principles of Revolution

Apart, however, from his economics and history what is most effective now in Marx is his general attitude, which implies that the most important fact of contemporary life is the impoverishment, enslavement, suffering, and premature death of most of the population in every civilized country. This, he might say, and not the amount of war-debt or the guilt of the Kaiser, should be what attracts attention. This fact, and not the vagaries of commerce or the economics of production, should be the great subject for social theorists and practical politicians. Marx, when he omits formulas and writes with passion of actual men and women, is a better scientist; for the fundamental facts cannot be expressed in the terms of any formula.

Marx is also effective because of another assumption implied in his fundamental attitude—the assumption that the cure of these social evils must involve a radical transformation of society. The transformation may occur in the natural process of the development of social organization, and in any case the betterment of society must be based upon the natural process; but the ultimate question is as to the kind of world we desire to inhabit. No generous and intelligent human being desires anything less than a complete transformation to abolish those evils which mere benevolence within the established system cannot cure. The end we have in view is an England, and indeed a world, where men are free from the physical want and the trivial cares which make life poor and brutish—a country of free men in a world at peace.

CHAPTER III

MAZZINI AND THE NEW NATIONALISM

MAZZINI'S work was not done even among his own people when Italy was unified. He has been a prophet thrust aside ; and since his death he has been honoured indeed, but his ideals have been forgotten or deliberately opposed. These ideals, however, may be still powerful. His importance for us now is due to the fact that nationalism is having a new and not altogether propitious growth, although it is recognized as respectable ; but he was a prophet of nationalism when nationalism was synonymous with revolution. He was also a Republican when monarchs were more plentiful, and republicanism is now as little feared as nationalism ; but the new credit these words have been given in the established order of society only proves that Mazzini's meaning is forgotten.

Revolutions have already produced new national units in the lands of the late Russian and Austrian Empires : and it is too late in regard to these to do more than criticize or attempt to correct tendencies unworthy of the gospel of national freedom. The work of a prophet like Mazzini may affect the conscience of men who have already achieved something of what he incited them to do : and in that sense the nationalism for which Mazzini stood may be a corrective for the nationalism which others

have applied. Doubtless he would himself be aston ished at the nationalism of the groups now controllin or confusing the peoples in the lands of the Russia and Austrian Empires. It would be worth study t discover how far the influence of Mazzini is responsibl for what has already happened. But we are not a the end of the period of revolutionary nationalism Indeed, the signs point to conflicts of a more intricat and perhaps a more disastrous kind than those whic have succeeded the downfall of three Empires. Th conflict of nationalities is only beginning.

The British Empire contains the possible sources o such conflict in Ireland, Egypt, India, and even Sout Africa. France has subject populations in its colonie and even closer to Paris. Italy has had her Tripo war, and now has new groups under her dominion whos souls repudiate allegiance to Rome. In the Unite States the problem of nationality, though partly solve among emigrants because the attention of nationa groups before the war was turned away from traditiona differences, has revived in the bitterness of war an vindictive victory: and more dangerous than all—th colour problem has taken a new development under th pressure of industrial changes. But these are onl examples of the problems of nationality arising withi the jurisdiction of powerful and long-established govern ments. The rest of the world appears to be divide into national groups which are either murdering mino ities or invading their neighbours' territories under th pretext of nationalist claims. Macedonia is still a pos sible source of future wars. The new kingdom of th Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes is already threatened wit dissolution or nationalist uprisings. The Poles and th

Jews in Poland disagree as to which party began murdering the other. The Greeks about Smyrna have slaughtered unarmed Turks in the name of nationalist rights: and in the East the great conflict of Japanese and Chinese ideals is only just beginning. There must indeed be a radical transformation of society before we are rescued from such a world.

The evil against which Mazzini protested was oppression of the people by rulers of an alien race: and that protest is still to be made and is necessary still in many parts of the world. Whenever an alien race controls the life of a people, oppression exists. It is oppression because no civilized people can believe themselves incapable of conducting their own affairs in their own way. It is oppression because the people so ruled feel themselves to be capable of a great future, and are in many cases conscious of having had a great past. This feeling, this consciousness, is the fire of nationalism, and it burns with an intense flame under foreign oppression, but it does not cease to burn when the oppression disappears. There lies the possible danger in the nationalism which, as Mazzini said, arises from the fact that it is more often a demand for rights than the acceptance of a duty. Mazzini did not deny the existence of national rights, but he conceived their realization as only the preliminary to the achievement of the duty of a nation towards humanity as a whole. "The theory of right enables us to rise and overthrow obstacles, but not to found a strong and lasting accord between all the elements which compose the nation."[1] It is the beginning of nationalism to secure a nation from foreign oppression.

The evil Mazzini saw round him was not, however,

[1] *Duties of Man*, chap. i. p. 15.

simply foreign. He knew perfectly well that oppressors are not all aliens among the people whom they oppress. That other oppression by the wealthy and the privileged, who are patriotic enough, not only caused suffering among the poor and the dependent, but killed the very soul of a nation. Men will talk loudly of the might of England or Italy who have no scruple in degrading fellow Englishmen and Italians. They will join against the foreigner—to capture his trade: but they will not yield an atom of wealth or power to make their own land happy. But Mazzini is not concerned to attack persons. He, like other revolutionaries, arraigns the established system by which the control of men's lives is put into the hands of the possessors of capital and their agents. The evil as he sees it is oppression, not simply poverty or starvation, but the control of some men by others. And this control is as much forced into the hands of the few who hold it as grasped at by them: for society is so organized that the vast majority of any people, whether or not they are oppressed by foreigners, are prevented from developing what would alone make their own nation great.

Such being the evils, what remedy can be found? Mazzini's appeal is made, not to the intellectuals nor to the nation as a whole, but definitely to the Italian working-men. And these men are conceived to be precisely those who suffer most under the present regime —"poor, enslaved, unhappy"; men who have to send out their children to labour, men overworked and underpaid. They are not, then, any visionary proletariat, but the men, women, and children who can be seen still in great numbers in all the cities of Italy and in most of her small towns. Anyone who has seen Naples or

Rome or Genoa knows that if Italy is now "free" great numbers of the inhabitants of these cities cannot in any sense be "Italy": but these poor, enslaved, unhappy men are to be the saviours of themselves and of the world.

Again, it is noteworthy that Mazzini makes his appeal to the working-men of Italy "in the name of God." His theology need not confuse the issue. The point is that, by contrast to revolutionaries such as Marx and in repudiation of the economic gospel, the appeal is made in the name of what is highest and best in all human experience. Some have thought that they must speak "down" to the people: some have imagined the intelligence and the emotions of the people to be crude and trivial: and even the professed friends of the people have often been guilty of condescension. But they are wrong. No appeal is too lofty to move the common folk, though it may leave the "well-bred" unmoved.

The appeal thus made is not limited in its purview to the immediate distresses suffered by the poor: for in Mazzini's eyes it was not simply the suffering of the poor that constituted social evil. Society could not be made endurable by a mere grant of money and leisure to working-men. A revolution was necessary because the whole of society was affected with a mortal illness. "Italian working-men, we live in an epoch like Christ's. We live in the midst of a society rotten as that of the Roman Empire, and feel in our souls the need of reviving and transforming it, of associating all its members and its workers in one single faith, under one single law, and for one purpose." [1] The change must be radical, because the evil was deeply ingrained.

[1] *To the Italian Working-Man*, p. 19.

The Principles of Revolution

The method must be revolution. "Every revolution is the work of a principle which has been accepted as a basis of faith." "A revolution proclaims that the state is rotten; that its machinery no longer meets the needs of the greatest number of the citizens; that its institutions are powerless to direct the general movement; that popular and social thought has passed beyond the vital principle of these institutions; that the new phase in the development of the national faculties finds neither expression nor representation in the official constitution of the country, and that it must therefore create one for itself. This the revolution does create."[1] The change, therefore, is not a mere change of government, nor the substitution of one class for another in the control of society, nor a gradual reform, but a radical transformation. On the other hand, Mazzini distinguishes riot and insurrection from revolution. "Without the purpose hinted at above, there may be riots and at times victorious insurrections, but no revolutions." The contrast is founded on the fact that revolution is positive and constructive: it is not the mere displacement of one group of interests by another group of interests. It is a force for social reorganization: and this involves not only, as Mazzini says, that it must be based on a principle of duty towards other men, but that it must depend upon much labour *after* the old order is displaced. It would be futile to imagine that social reorganization came into existence without deliberate thought and the expenditure of much energy, or at least, although some anarchists have imagined no organization to be needed, that is not the conception of Mazzini.

[1] *Interests and Principles*, p. 129.

In his eyes the real revolution only begins when thought and imagination are at work to build up a new world, and the destruction of the old may be simply a result of decay or of age supplanted by youth. Thus the new leaves in the spring do not destroy last year's leaves, but simply take their place. The world of the new order will be a complex of many free nationalities, organized economically and politically on democratic lines. The principle of nationalism, as Mazzini expressed it, certainly implies that nationality is a basis for a distinct form of government. Nationality cannot be made into a mere religious or cultural sentiment: and even religion and culture cannot survive without organization. But if the organization of these two is non-political, that of nationality must be political in the most limited sense of the word. That is to say, nationality is properly expressed in forms of civil administration, of law and of government. "The form of government must, if it is not to be injurious or useless, represent the sum total of the integral elements of the country. In the ideal that Europe is seeking and will realize, the Government will be the mind of a nation, the people its arm, and the educated and free individual its prophet of future progress." [1]

Each of these nations of the world will respect and serve the other: for each will exist for the sake not of its rights, but of its duties to humanity as a whole. "You have a country in order that you may labour for the benefit of all men. Those who teach morality and limit its obligations to duties towards family or country, teach you a more or less narrow egoism"; [2] and yet the latest exponents of Italian nationalism have not been

[1] *To the Italians*, p. 231. [2] *Duties of Man*, chap. iv.

ashamed to use the very word "egoism" as though it were sacred.

Again, the form of government will be republican. Mazzini has no hesitations as to monarchy. "Monarchy had its day and mission. The world is now seeking, not material solidarity, but the moral unity that can only be based upon the association of men and nations equal and free. Monarchy, based upon the doctrine of inequality, or the privilege of an individual or of a family, can never give that unity." [1] Thus all the common arguments which survive the conspicuous failures of monarchy are refuted by the perception of the nature of monarchy. It is obsolete as a motive force, for the unity it symbolizes is primitive; and if it is argued that it has historical tradition behind it, the same refutation may be used as that against the mediæval church or the system of torture. An evil is not less evil because it is old. Nor is it possible, as Mazzini saw, to preserve the name and forms of monarchy while limiting or withdrawing its substance. The life of monarchy is in its forms: and so long as these survive it has enough substance to be socially an evil. Good monarchs, bourgeois monarchs like Louis Philippe, only make the evil more obvious: for the monarch inevitably stands for a distinction of quality subordinating citizens and making them into mere subjects; and he absorbs into himself the reverence for the nation which the people should feel is due to themselves, the nation itself. The only real reason for its maintenance, as Mazzini himself would say, is the reason why in some countries it is maintained —the people are too primitive to do without it.

Finally, the new world will be one in which all nations

[1] *To the Italians* p. 227.

conspire to reorganize on a new basis the whole of commerce and finance. No description is given of the new organization, but its general character is indicated. "Do you answer that it is enough for you to organize better the government and the social conditions of your own country? It is not enough. No people lives to-day exclusively on its own produce; you live by exchange, by importation and exportation. An impoverished nation in which the number of consumers diminishes is one market the less for you. A foreign commerce upon which a bad administration brings crises or ruin produces crises and ruin in yours. The failures of England and of America bring about Italian failures. Credit nowadays is not a national but a European institution. Moreover, in any attempt at national reform you will have all the Governments hostile to you, in consequence of the alliance contracted between princes, who are the first to recognize that the social question is a general one in the present day." [1] The organization of the peoples is to be as close and definite as the organization of the present controllers of commerce and finance; and it is to be world-wide. The moral may be pointed by the experience of the war and of the time since the armistice. The Allies were driven to joint purchases of material in order to guard themselves against the rapacity of the controllers of commerce and industry; and since that joint purchase has ceased, since the organization for joint control has been dissolved, the selfish control of the few has held up the supply of commodities for which the world is starving. What is needed is not a mere destruction of trusts and combines, but a better organization to replace them.

[1] *Duties of Man*, chap. iv. p. 49.

The Principles of Revolution

We have listened to much recent oratory concerning the rights of small nations, but to nothing more inspiring than the words of Mazzini. The most modern of our orators does not escape from that crudity of thought which is perhaps inseparable from the age of barbarism culminating in the late war. Even our idealism is somewhat childish: and some of us appear to believe that men can be taught to be virtuous by hitting them on the head. But if the rights of small nations are somewhat crudely conceived, what shall we say of the duties of great nations? The common service of Humanity of which Mazzini spoke appears to be reduced to the activities of a well-intentioned but somewhat ferocious policeman. The word is—Mandatories. It is futile, however, to blame the present for forgetting the prophets. They say that a live dog is better than a dead lion: and, although it is largely a matter of taste—for the roar even of a dead lion may be more dignified than a contemporary dog-fight—we need not amend the proverb. The trouble is that Mazzini is not dead: and our practical men and our over-subtle politicians will soon discover it. When at Paris "they" lately attempted to re-map the world according to principles sometimes believed to be just and also to number fourteen, "they" forgot many things, and Mazzini among others.

The problem for us now is whether any radical change can be achieved and maintained in the relation between national groups. If Mazzini is right, it can. The application of one principle in many different spheres of action and thought will make the achievement difficult; but there is no doubt as to the principle itself. The principle is that each nation, being the people and

not its rulers or its rich men, has a duty to perform to all other nations, and must seek to give and not to take.

It is, indeed, absurd to suppose that we can solve at one blow the problems of Ireland and Ulster, of India, of the Jews in Poland, and of the minorities generally in Eastern Europe. No one but a fool indeed would imagine that these problems are all solved by the mere enunciation of a principle; for its application to facts is the only real solution, and this may be difficult. It will certainly take some time in certain corners of the world. Nevertheless, whatever its particular applications, clearly if the principle enunciated were understood the difficulties would begin to be solved. If the peoples, and not their rulers or their rich lords, came into contact, they would clearly find in the common need for a fuller life a ground for amity: and if each people came to the help of others, as some men at least in England came to the help of Belgium—though subtle leaders may have deluded them—then we should not have to stand to arms in fear of our neighbours. But the interests of diverse and contending groups in each nation separate the peoples, partly for economic reasons, partly for that still shabbier reason, "glory." "The remedy for your present condition," says Mazzini, "is the union of capital and labour in the same hands." [1]

The revolution in the relation between nations will be achieved by organizing the control of commerce, finance, and industry on an international scale in the hands of the peoples. This is briefly suggested by Mazzini but not developed, partly because he was more concerned with the freedom of Italy than with the place

[1] *Duties of Man*, p. 108.

of Italy in the world when she had achieved freedom, partly because he was not an economist but a moralist. He was not, however, unaware of the fundamental importance of the control of food and clothing. The new moral attitude among peoples must have economic consequences, for one of the greatest obstacles to the new morality is a particular form of the new nationalism. Economic nationalism was growing before the war, and war experiences have reinforced the power and prestige of those who desire to make of each state an economic unit. Not only great Empires such as the British suffer from the absurd appetite for self-sufficiency ; but even comparatively small and new states such as Czecho-Slovakia or Poland make attempts to develop their own special and independent industry. Naturally no people like to feel that they are kept in what they regard as a more primitive state of development for the advantage of other peoples. Countries which are chiefly agricultural have been, and perhaps still are, more primitive than industrial countries ; and therefore the agricultural countries seek to develop industry within their own borders. This is more than a mere revulsion against dependence on foreign agricultural implements or foreign capital, for it is a genuine attempt to develop the civilization of a nation in the only form in which it is commonly appreciated nowadays. An agricultural state cannot have its own armaments or even its own type of railways, and the accepted standards of civilized life appear to imply that the Great Powers are great because of their armaments and industry. These standards are undoubtedly wrong ; and clearly a peasantry may well be more civilized than an industrial proletariat ; but the world is moved by commonplace standards of admi-

ration, and therefore nations are urged to be "great" by being industrial. They therefore seek excuses in nationality for appropriating coalfields or manufacturing centres or ports, and the revulsion against any dependence on foreigners works to the benefit of a few owners of capital.

The same revulsion against dependence, foolish and primitive as it is, may be found in the economic nationalism of larger states such as the British Empire and the United States. It is due, in part, to a vague fear of foreigners and, in part, to the fantastic and obsolete gospel of self-sufficiency. The Report of the Dominions Royal Commission, for example, contains the same obsolete political philosophy as can be found in the crudities of Polish and Serbian speeches. The British Empire is regarded by the Commission as ideally a self-sufficing economic unit.

The only method of introducing a new and better political philosophy is by a change in public opinion. The peoples concerned must be awakened to the advantages which accrue to them from interchange of their products with foreigners; but no such advantage will follow unless the control of interchange is in popular hands. The fundamental solution, then, of the difficulties arising out of economic nationalism is to be found in a joint control of commerce and finance by the peoples of the world.

Even this radical change, however, is not primarily economic in character. It is moral. It involves not simply the erection of a new international organization, but the establishment of the international mind, and this it is difficult to establish. Human history up to date is a mere record of tribes and tribal custom. Civil-

ization has hardly begun : and atavism shows itself easily in the presence of foreigners or when their existence is brought to notice. The international mind, however, may be developed by almost material circumstances such as closer contact and the increase of the need for foreign products. During the war, as was noted above, an international organization grew up ; and it was supported by a rudimentary mind—the common purpose of the Allies ; but that purpose having been achieved, there was not enough international percipience for any support to be given to the joint purchases and joint controls from which the peoples had derived benefit during the war. The organization fell to pieces : and now what is necessary is not a recrudescence of war-controls, but a general appreciation of the fact that administration should not be limited by frontiers. If we want a peaceful world, we must organize peace ; and that organization must be based upon a moral transformation, upon the establishment of the sense of the equality of foreigners with ourselves.

It may seem unreasonable to make the prophet of nationalism into the advocate of internationalism : but the two are not opposed except in the mistaken senses of the two words. Mazzini was perfectly right in asserting that nationalism must be founded on the *duty* of the nation towards other nations, and he was also right in his argument that for this the perception of the quality and the function of other nations than our own is absolutely essential. But how, in fact, can the peoples come into contact and each learn to respect the best qualities of the other ? The common folk of most countries hate a foreigner more than a diplomatist hates an alien diplomatist. The peoples are separated by lack of

education, diversities of language, and their undeveloped imaginations: and therefore some have argued that only a slow process of education can produce the international mind. Nevertheless, the change may be a revolution, for it may be radical and sudden. As we have seen, a common purpose accepted by the peoples with enthusiasm will create a new mind in a day. That common purpose may suddenly become obvious. Food may be deficient, disease may spread internationally, as we have seen the influenza of 1918 spread; and the peoples may suddenly rise to the occasion of a new and more splendid alliance—the alliance of humanity in a hostile world. The whole conception is obviously hypothetical, for it is equally possible that the nations will be induced to prepare new and more dreadful wars, that each people will assist civil war in their neighbour's country, and that the race will die out in agony.

But the new world may come instead by the establishment of a new moral outlook, and the result of this new moral attitude among the peoples of all nations will be, first, the appreciation of the fact that the full and free development of neighbouring peoples is a gain and not a loss to ourselves. This, and this only, will solve the difficulty of foreign oppression and national jealousy without creating new difficulties by the exercise or the threat of force. For example, if the people of England could appreciate the fact that they themselves would gain from a full and free development of Ireland, it would do more for the future of the world than any solution of the problem based upon a balance of conflicting rights. It should be obvious that if Ireland were a wealthier, more populous, and more productive country, England would benefit from Irish imports and from an

Irish market. Further, it should be obvious that the minds and imaginations of the Irish were free to pla upon the problems of government, industry and educa tion or culture, England and the whole world woul benefit; but at present the whole mental activity Ireland appears to be restricted to overcoming th obstacle of superior force. The better political educatio of England would be the salvation of Ireland: and the English people could develop their imagination little—whether by the cinema, or "sports," or som other kindergarten method—perhaps the problems India and Egypt could also be solved. Clearly the should be at least a system of compulsory education fo all who are elected members of Parliament and for th Peerage. It would cost the taxpayer less than the prese experiments in government.

The solution of the nationalist problem is not ver different abroad. Italy could perhaps be induced understand that it is no advantage to her to keep th Eastern coast of the Adriatic undeveloped, and that sh would derive the greatest advantage in allowing th peoples of the Northern and Eastern Adriatic coasts call themselves by other than Italian names. The peop of Italy at least, if not the company promoters, coul allow Greek islands to be Greek without prejudicing th future status or fortunes of Italy.

In France it may take some years of recovery fro shell-shock before the people understand that a ful developed Germany is an advantage to themselves but it is certain that France would benefit from the fr organization of German industry and governmen Obviously France in this sense does not mean the Frenc iron and steel magnates, but the people of France: an

the magnates may still for many years persuade the French to prepare for war while they sell the implements of war to the Germans. And the Germans on their part will have their own magnates urging them to revenge; but this, too, may be overcome by a common need for food and liberty.

The solution is not achieved unless the development of the rival nationalities is reciprocal. One nation does not gain by civilization if another remains savage. That has always been at the heart of the problem. It seems to be impossible for any one state or people to initiate the new world. Some one people must indeed make the first step: and if the first step is to be to help with food and money, obviously the opportunity for immortal honour is now before the English-speaking races. Will they accept the task, and give without expecting reward or thanks? What man will be great enough to convince the peoples of their duty to make the great *beau geste* which will initiate the new world of friendship between the peoples?

This solution must be reached, not only because it is revolutionary and the relations of nations need a radical transformation, but also because the alternative is the complete ruin of whatever is fair and fine in life. If the nations are unable to revolutionize international politics, they will develop into tremendous proportions their several egoisms. The inevitable result will be universal and permanent war: and the world of our grandchildren will be a sparse population on a barren earth, covered with the graves of young men. The idealism of the armies of 1914 did not arise from a desire to capture trade or to manufacture more steel rails than our neighbours, or to clothe more Chinese in Manchester

cottons. But these are the only results of economi nationalism and self-sufficiency.

It may be, however, that a revolution can be achieve in the world of states. Perhaps it will be understoo in a sudden vision by all peoples that a nation is grea for what it gives and not for what it can take. It ma be seen some day that the advantages of "national wealth should accrue to the people. If we count a national all wealth owned by British citizens, then w must contrive that its advantages do not result in Eto and fine houses for one man and in work in the mills o the pits for the vast majority: and if we count onl that wealth as national which is directly owned an used by the state, even in regard to that much remain to be done in order to equalize the opportunities c citizens.

No such transformation, in any case, can be brough about by an appeal to economic principles, for here w move in the world in which not wealth or value is th current coin, but justice and liberty.

CHAPTER IV

WILLIAM MORRIS AND INDUSTRY

CAN a middle-class Englishman who never had to work for a living be a revolutionary? The *Times* would hardly believe it; for, as we know, foreigners may be anything terrible—anarchists, socialists, bolsheviks, revolutionaries; but an Englishman, never—or at least not an Englishman who is healthy and normal in his habits. The evidence, however, seems to point to the fact that William Morris desired and worked for, not reform or progress or anything else but revolution. "The word Revolution," he says, "has a terrible sound in most people's ears, even when we have explained to them that it does not necessarily mean a change accompanied by riot and all kinds of violence." People are scared, and beg that you will speak of reform and not revolution; but "we will stick to our word, which means a change in the basis of society; it may frighten people, but it will at least warn them that there is something to be frightened about." [1] The evil in civilization seemed to Morris so deep-seated that nothing less than a revolution would satisfy him. "The study of history and the love and practice of art forced me into a hatred of civilization which, if things were to stop as they are, would turn history into inconsequent nonsense and make art a collection of the curiosities of the past which would

[1] *How we Live*, p. 3.

have no serious relation to the life of the present." [1] What was wrong was that very evolutionary progress which the nineteenth century complacently accepted as desirable; not simply the actual evils of poverty and ugliness were objectionable, but the underlying tendencies which point towards the future. Morris therefore desired a complete break with the existing system and the process which had produced it.

Still more astonishing to anyone who believes in national characteristics, this middle-class Englishman, besides being a confessed revolutionary, was an artist who was not ashamed of art. The aim of art, to his mind, was to bring us "courage and hope—that is, eager life"; but the whole conception is unintelligible to anyone who thinks of art as an ornament of drawing-rooms among the leisured classes. Morris's wall-papers became fashionable, although now many would doubt their excellence: but Morris himself was never under a delusion as to his own productions. He knew that there could be no real art in what he regarded as a slave society; or, more exactly, he saw that the hints we have had of art are only foretastes of what art will be when men are free. Indeed, it was this very devotion to art which compelled him to be a revolutionary. He was not moved by an economic theory of what is and what might be better, but by the perception of the increase of ugliness and futility in the whole of modern civilization. Here, then, is where he stands among the revolutionaries. He saw in the full flush of its first pride the industrial system which had made the wealthy wealthier and the poor poorer, and had produced the surrounding ugliness in which both live.

[1] *How I Became a Socialist*, p. 280, vol. xxiii. of Collected Works.

The immediate and practical interest in his work, then, is in regard to modern industry. Those characteristics of civilization which Morris hated and despised were largely the effect of the new industrial system; and his protests and efforts have been quite unavailing to restrain the tendencies he deplored. The towns are even vaster and uglier than in his day. The country he knew was unpeopled, the life of the majority meagre, and the whole of civilization an unmeaning scramble to live in the midst of a featureless and characterless herd of incompetent barbarians: but that situation, in all essentials, is present to our eyes now, and is as heartily condemned by many who suffer from it but who cannot express their condemnation so well as Morris did. The sufferers, however, are not only those who are affected by physical want. Obviously the poor and the enslaved suffer most when they are not quite benumbed by their condition: but the present alliance between these and the more intelligent of the educated classes is not a mere accident, nor is it due to a caprice of young *poseurs*. There may be some youthful fools who enjoy being "advanced" and revolutionary. There are, however, some, like Morris, who, although not physically suffering want, do suffer intensely at the sight of modern civilization. It is not simply that they sympathize with the poor: it is that they are filled with disgust and intelligent irritation at the hopeless futility of the world of contending states, savagely jealous peoples, the greasy rich and the emaciated poor, the trivial purposes of successful effort, and the appalling incompetence of those who hold political and industrial power.

The analysis of the situation given by Morris is not at first sight different from that of the ordinary revolu-

tionary economics. The evil is said to be due to the fact that services are not rewarded duly, and that control of their lives and work is not in the hands of the workers. As Morris puts it, "The general rule is that the more undeniably useful a man's services are, the worse his position; as, for example, the agricultural labourers who raise our most absolute necessaries are the most poverty-stricken of all our slaves." [1]

And the fundamental cause is thus explained: "It is due to monopoly—that subtle monopoly by which a small class hold the material and the machinery on which production depends. The sum of their monopoly is called Property, of which the direct and necessary result is that the law of nature that livelihood follows labour is reversed, since those who work hardest get least and those who work least fare best." [2]

All the elaborate organization of society is said to be for the sake of maintaining this injustice: "This privilege of the robber by force of arms is just the thing which it is the aim and end of our present organization to uphold; and all the formidable executive at the back of it—army, police, law-courts, presided over by the judge as representing the executive—is directed towards this one end: to take care that the richest shall rule and shall have full license to injure the Commonwealth to the full extent of their riches." [3] Therefore the only hope of a better world is a radical transformation of society: "No programme is worthy the acceptance of the working classes that stops short of the abolition of private property in the means of production." [4]

Naturally, if the evil borne by the poor were com-

[1] *Monopoly*, p. 243. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 250. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 263.
[4] *Art*, p. 253.

pensated for by immense gains to society as a whole, there might be some reason for hesitation; but Morris finds that the best results are a "sordid, aimless, ugly confusion." Wealth and vulgarity go hand in hand; and against both his soul revolted.

This is so far an analysis which is commonly called socialistic, and the expression of a personal abhorrence; but Morris was not simply a repetition of Karl Marx. The real gravamen of his charge is in regard to the meanness, triviality, and ugliness of what was accepted as best in nineteenth-century civilization; and this he felt not simply as an observer, but as a craftsman and producer. "Apart from the desire to produce beautiful things, the leading passion of my life has been and is hatred of modern civilization." Therefore he adds an original and important thesis to the tradition of revolutionary prophets. Marx believed in a development of what he saw round him into a better order: but Morris revolts against the best that such a process could produce.

In the first place the language of his socialistic addresses should not mislead us. His criteria are not economic. Not the distribution of wealth, but the distribution of vitality, was his interest. The well-being of a man was not reckoned by him in terms of the wealth he possesses, nor even in terms of the wealth he produces. The evil as he saw it was not the maldistribution of wealth, although this he had learnt from his Socialist teachers to regard as evil: the worst feature of contemporary civilization seemed to him the meagreness of the best life that wealth could get. Again, social theory is not in Morris a part of economics, but a part of the theory of art organization. What was wrong with society was that there was no free play for those human energies

of which art is the finest outcome. Men were compelled to earn a livelihood, and the "compulsory service" of industry could produce no results satisfying to a man who retained his manhood. Art is, says Morris, "the expression of pleasure in the labour of production"; [1] and he thereby sets aside the art of art schools as well as the current economic idea of production, for he means to include as the products of art all that industry or labour can produce.

Production, therefore, has not its purely economic meaning when Morris uses the word. In fact, the "producer" is still too often thought of as a sort of economic man, producing either for economic consumption or economic use. But what if he produces for pleasure? There can be no economic estimate of pleasure: and the producer in this sense is not performing part of an economic process. It is an altogether different world. Artistic or vital impulse producing and artistic or vital perception receiving are outside the ken of the economist. The evil, then, as Morris saw it, was not economic, and the cure was not economic.

For this reason Morris refuses to admit the use of money in his Utopia. In *News from Nowhere* a man commands services and takes consumable goods, as the economist would say, for nothing, and this is clearly intended to indicate that goods and services are not, in the ideal society, produced for exchange, but simply because the producers like to produce them. They have, therefore, no economic value, although the lowest form of work is still done for the primitive motive of admiration. "All work," says the Utopian, "is now pleasurable: either because of the hope of gain in

[1] *Art*, p. 256.

honour and wealth with which the work is done, which causes pleasurable excitement, even when the work is not pleasant ; or else because it has grown into a pleasurable habit, as in the case of what you may call mechanical work : and lastly (and most of our work is of this kind) because there is a conscious sensuous pleasure in the work itself ; it is done, that is, by artists." [1] The suggestion implies that economics as commonly understood is not a true account of any essential element in man's nature, but only a general statement of his present bad habits. But not only is the economic motive repudiated : another and more pernicious current conception is also disproved —that of the "spur of necessity." Earlier revolutionaries had shown that the need for food and clothing is not essential in order to induce a man to exercise his energies, although in certain primitive stages of development the inertia of the mind may require some such stimulus. Play, indeed, is more human and more humane than the energizing we distinguish from play by calling it work : but Morris goes further by showing that the motive for work-play is not any vague social conscience, but the simple pleasure the player feels.[2] If, therefore, poverty and the fear of want be removed, it would not follow that goods would cease to be produced, since men are not naturally moved only by the fear or the experience of want. There are, of course, persons brought up in the belief, which they find in the very social atmosphere, that no energy is pleasurable or that they should not move until they are driven to it. No one denies that such persons may cease to work if the lash of the

[1] *News from Nowhere*, p. 107.

[2] The theory is more elaborately argued in the *Aims of Art*, p. 82 *et seq.*

slave-drivers, fear and poverty, is no longer used; bu
these persons are, in that far, not genuinely men: the
are still bestial, and in a society of men they would eithe
die prematurely or be kept as undomestic animal
Writers like Rousseau, therefore, who seem to impl
that the social problem will be one of forcing the un
willing to do some useful work, are less acute in the
reasoning than the craftsman, Morris; for these olde
revolutionaries have, in fact, accepted as true the fals
hypothesis of their opponents as to the nature of man
productive energy.

The evil circumstances of the time would have made
poet and a craftsman naturally turn to those who wer
the professed patrons of art and the educated. Th
world might be made better by them. Morris, there
fore, for a moment attempted to enter the peculia
province of the governing classes of England, the pastim
they call "politics"; but he turned from it and fro
them with anger. No man has ever said more clearl
than Morris that what is wrong with our world is no
simply the suffering of those who suffer, but the incom
petence of those who do not. In the essay called *Whig
Democrats, and Socialists*, Morris analyses and condemn
the Parliament of the Whig Rump which will gran
every reform except the fundamentally necessary abol
tion of privilege. The whole of politics is for him a gam
of the governing classes, and "Constitutionalism"
the enemy of the people. The charge against the Englis
governing classes was not that they were dishonest, bu
that they were incompetent. This does not imply, o
course, that any other class or any other nation is mo
competent, but it is intended to disturb the complacenc
with which the Colonial and Indian Civil Service, th

retired persons in clubs, and the officials of the Central Government in London regard their administration of the Empire. Honest fools, blind to the nature of the task they might accomplish, easily persuade themselves that what they have done is the best that can be done. But incompetence is a heavy charge when the fortunes and happiness of many millions suffer from it : and blindness to their own shortcomings is no excuse for the governing class.

Putting aside the administration of Great Britain, against which the populace have at least the power to protest effectively, the administration of those parts of the Empire which have no self-government was open to criticism. The case of Ireland it is unnecessary to emphasize. Morris made it in 1886 an instance of the ineffectiveness of parliamentary government.[1] But India and Egypt, even to-day, are sufficiently alarming examples of incompetent government. The Punjab and Cairo in 1919 are evident proofs of the charge of ignorance and folly. In East Africa the land system, introduced and maintained by an incorrupt but unintelligent officialism, will either drive the natives to hopeless rebellion or enslave and kill them all. In South Africa the treatment of the unfortunate Matabele and Mashona tribes, and the exploitation of Rhodesia are not models of administrative ability. In Fiji the Australian Sugar Company has in the past imported labour from India and kept it enslaved without protest from local officials or the Home Government. And in various other unnoticed corners of what the British complacently regard as their possessions, capitalist companies are actually supported in their exploitation of the land and the people by officials

[1] *Whigs, Democrats, and Socialists*, p. 35.

who innocently regard capitalist enterprise as the marc
of progress.

All this and more is said by contemporary critic
whose words are often in a foreign tongue and therefo
do not reach the intelligence of the English governi
classes ; but the charges made by Morris are the sam
These charges are not and were not intended by Mor
to be anti-British : nor do they imply that the rule
the French or the Portuguese compares favourab
with ours. The problem cannot be solved by simp
saying that others are worse, nor by putting it aside
subordinate to the maintenance of the *pax Britannic*
which is undoubtedly a gain. The whole of the politic
machinery and the class which controls it seem to t
revolutionary to be useless for the attainment of a bett
social order.

Thus we have round us evident social evils and
methods of radical transformation. The argument poin
to the need for revolution, but the method of attainin
a better order must be considered only after a cle
conception is developed of that order.

The positive suggestions for the remedy of these evi
in the socialistic essays of Morris are not noticeab
different from the suggestions of other socialists. B
it would be impossible to restrict the force of Morris
argument to his professedly controversial writing. H
was a poet as well as a craftsman ; and the world he hope
for is therefore embodied, not in the conclusion of a
argument, but in a vision. It is essential to the for
of the vision that its chief elements should be derive
from a conception of the Middle Ages.

It matters very little that the conception of the Midd
Ages accepted by Morris is not historically accurate. N

historian now believes that the thirteenth century was a time of happy and healthy freedom and fellowship: and even the best work of that time in architecture and in literature is not so highly estimated now as it was by Morris. The picture of the Middle Ages now given by historians is more grim: the successes of the time are now known to have been limited. But historical criticism of the details is irrelevant to an estimate of a visionary Golden Age; for it is true enough that the Middle Ages had a vitality and vigour, a beauty and an originality of craftsmanship which we have lost.

The beginnings of the new order, according to Morris, are found in all the efforts of the great men of old time, who worked not for conquest nor wealth nor fame, but for the Fellowship of Men. The tyranny of the times of John Ball was to change into the tyranny of our own day. "Strong shall be the tyranny of the latter days," cries John Ball in despair, but the answer comes, "John Ball, be of good cheer: for once more thou knowest, as I know, that the Fellowship of Men shall endure, however many tribulations it may have to war through." The revolts of the thirteenth century, as well as the art of that time, filled Morris with hope for what men could do; but what he found in that old time most clearly to be a part of his Utopia was craftsmanship and fellowship. Modern industry had destroyed both, not by the mere introduction of machines, which he knew to be admirable in their places, but by privilege and monopoly, the social institutions which control all machinery. Utopia was therefore to be like the thirteenth century in giving back to work the sense of craftsmanship. A man was somehow to be his own master in choosing his work and designing what he was to

produce: and, because no man was to be thought good enough to be another man's master, all men were to be free in mind and body. The ideal England was in this sense mediæval, as Bartholomew the Englishman described it in 1250: "England is a strong land and a sturdy, and the plenteousest corner of the world, so rich a land that hardly it needeth help of any other land, and every other land needeth help of England. England is full of mirth and of game, and men oft times able to mirth and game, free men of heart and with tongue, but the hand is more better and more free than the tongue."[1] The world which Morris desired, then, is this merry England; and his Utopia is expressed in his prose Romances and in the tales of the Earthly Paradise—a world of dream perhaps, but more desirable than the many colourless and mechanical Utopias of our own day.

The details of the picture are given in *News from Nowhere*. "The spirit of the new days," the old man there says, "was to be delight in the life of the world. More akin (than that of the nineteenth century) to our way of looking at life was the spirit of the Middle Ages; but we (by contrast) believe in the continuous life of the world of men. And now, where is the difficulty in believing the religion of humanity when the men and women who go to make up humanity are free, happy and energetic at least, and most commonly beautiful of body also, and surrounded by beautiful things of their own fashioning, and a nature bettered and not worsened by contact with mankind."[2]

How then did Morris conceive it possible to reach

[1] *De Proprietatibus*, chap. xiv. trans. of 1397.
[2] *News from Nowhere*, p. 155.

his ideal world? The real world seems to grow worse. The characteristics of the modern industrial system are even more obvious to our eyes than they were to our grandfathers. The loss of personal responsibility for action in the industrial sphere and the lack of public control have been already touched upon; but although these are, indeed, fundamental evils, they cannot be eliminated until the field is cleared of many attendant abuses. In the abstract it might be thought possible to transform industry by inducing every one to change his attitude towards it or even by persuading the "captains of industry" to regard industry as a public service and not as a source of private profit; but in the everyday world of facts a fundamental change cannot be secured by so drastic and so spiritual a method. The solution of the difficulty is more complicated and more subtle; for it is not to be found in exhortation, but in careful thought. The problem must be approached, not in the sphere of moral exhortation, but by the practical destruction of the many props and supports of a system in which the majority acquiesce because they are accustomed to it. The habits and customs of the populace as well as of rich men will have to be changed, and the sceptic may very well doubt whether this can be speedily done. Horse-racing and betting may seem little things by comparison to the power of financial trusts; but these, and even the simpler "sport" of the looker-on, are parts of the system, and these are parts of their enslavement which are maintained by the people themselves. Newspapers may be classed by some as bad habits, more dangerous to the intellect and the emotions than alcohol. The popular flunkeyism and subservience to wealth is more corroding than the mis-

management of wealth by those who have it: and over the whole face of society is spread the grimy squalor of modern industry in the workshops and the houses inhabited by its human instruments: but these are accepted as inevitable, and even desirable, by the majority.

The most urgent practical problem to-day, then, in England and in other industrial countries, is not political nor even, in the wide sense of the word, economic, but definitely industrial. That is to say, it is not a problem of votes or political rights, nor even of the amount of money available for each, but of the occupations in which the workers are enslaved. Revolutionary tendencies have different sources in different countries, and where, as in Russia, most men are agriculturists or country people, revolution is due largely to discontent with landowners and a hope for better use of the land. Where men were city-bred but in small, independent groups of masters and assistants, revolution, as in the French Revolution, may be political. But the new elements in revolutionary feelings are the direct products of the system of large-scale industry: and therefore the new revolution must be industrial or occupational. It has become usual for historians to refer to the industrial revolution, by which they mean the sudden introduction of large-scale industry in place of domestic production: but in the truest sense of the phrase the industrial revolution has not yet occurred; and it can occur only when the autocracy of the present system in industry is overthrown. This will be the true industrial revolution according to William Morris.

How the autocracy is to be overthrown is a question of method. It may be by violence: and undoubtedly

the workers in industry have the power to make autocracy impossible, either by deliberate destruction or by withholding labour. Long ago that power was known to exist :

> The people is a beast of muddy brain
> That knows not its own strength, and therefore stands
> Loaded with wood and stone ; the powerless hands
> Of a mere child guide it with bit and rein ;
> One kick would be enough to break the chain,
> But the beast fears, and what the child demands
> It does ; nor its own terror understands,
> Confused and stupefied by bugbears vain.
>
> Most wonderful ! With its own hand it ties
> And gags itself—gives itself death and war
> For pence doled out by kings from its own store.
> Its own are all things between earth and heaven ;
> But this it knows not ; and if one arise
> To tell this truth, it kills him unforgiven.[1]

The power to destroy by violence is undoubted, but the wisdom of such a policy is more than doubtful.

[1] Campanella. Trans. by J. A. Symonds. The original is still more biting, and it indicates one point which Symonds has missed. The beast is feared.

> Il popolo è una bestia varia e grossa
> ch' ignora le sue forze ; e però stassi
> a pesi e botte di legni e di sassi,
> guidato da un fanciul che non ha possa,
> ch' egli potria disfar con una scossa :
> ma lo teme e lo serve a tutti spassi.
> Né sa quanto è temuto, ché i bombassi
> fanno un incanto, che i sensi gli ingrossa.
>
> Cosa stupenda ! e' s' appica e imprigiona
> con le man proprie, e si dá morte e guerra
> per un carlin di quanti egli al re dona.
> Tutto è suo quanto sta fra cielo e terra
> ma nol conosce ; e, se qualche persona
> di ciò l'avisa, e' l' uccide ed attera.

The results of violence are not predictable : destruction ruins even the destroyer : violence recoils on the violent. And in plain terms, as Morris saw, no subtle and effective and stable revolutionary change can be achieved if food and clothing and life itself are made insecure even for a few hours. Confusion is the worst possible preparation for a new order.

But, after all, the process of overthrowing autocracy is less important than the nature of the order which is to be set up in its place. If the captains of industry and the shareholders are to be displaced, what alternative organization is possible : for, however pernicious in some of the effects of its action, the governing class in industry does at present produce some good. Boots and hats are actually made and distributed : they may be bad boots badly distributed, but there should not be a time in which there are no boots at all. If, therefore, boots have to be made and distributed, and we dethrone the autocrats who now control, how did Morris conceive that the production can be organized ?

First, it will be organized by the producers themselves. The whole structure of social life, indeed, and not merely industry, will be organized by the producers. The emphasis on the producer has important consequences in view of a radical and rapid change in society such as may be called a revolution. A revolution governed by the conception of the producer will be quite distinct from one obsessed by the distinction of rich and poor. In the first place it displaces altogether the conception of society as divided into the upper, the middle, and the lower classes. Clearly these classes may be said to exist in our present world. They are in part survivals : for they result largely from the fact that there once were

landed or feudal aristocracy, guildsmen in the towns, and surfs or villeins. Similar distinctions of occupation, almost mediæval in their precision, exist in some countries even to-day, where the unskilled labourer is very far removed from the cultured landowner and both are clearly distinguished from the tradesman. But these are classes now distinguished by reference, not to occupation, but to wealth or property. The rich doctor feels himself part of the "upper" class rather than part of the health-workers; and all look upward to their "betters," for the social ideal is to be among the wealthy.

No one would deny that such distinctions exist; but, in the first place, these distinctions are less important socially than the division of society into classes of producers, and, secondly, the social classes of comparative wealth may be eliminated with advantage to the whole of social life. The gain from the destruction of the distinction between upper and lower would be that all men would be more independent. Flunkeys would be fewer. Ability would be more easily recognized and more correctly valued, because each man would rank by reference to the estimate of those who could judge the value of the work he did. "Honours" would be conferred by one's peers. The supply of ability for positions of social importance would be more varied and extensive. Society, so far from being reduced to a dead level of monotonously similar individuals, would be more varied, than it now is, for the disappearance of upper, middle, and lower classes would clear the social world for the appearance of innumerable varieties of skill and ability, and innumerable groups of such ability.

There is, then, a reasonable order of distinctions in

society which is based upon the social functions of th classes distinguished. Thus the producers become th basis of social organization. Consuming is hardly a social function, but only a condition precedent to pro ducing; and a man's humanity—all that makes him a man—is to be found in his activities as a producer rathe than in his power of absorption as a consumer. This follows from a conception of the nature of human life The vitality of a man is in his creative impulse, in which he pushes outward, growing and expanding into some thing new and indeed unique. When we ask "what" a man is, the reply generally is that he is a lawyer or an engineer or a poet. No one believes that a man can be described by reference to what he *has*, but all languages imply that a man is what he does.

The contrast is with man as a consumer; for as a consumer his need and his acquisitive capacity are prominent. The bare needs of food, clothing, and shelter make the beginning, and further needs may be developed by tastes or social convention or mere habit—needs, for example, for books or motor-cars or diamonds To acquire these a man must put forth some energy to absorb them or to use them he must expend more energy; but it is all energy of the centripetal or self-regarding kind. Its best purpose is to fill the appetites of the self, and such appetites are futile unless they are simply preparatory to the exercise of centrifugal or outward-reaching creative or productive impulses.

One further contrast is based upon the amounts and kinds of the two elements which make every man both a consumer and a producer. A man is a consumer in regard, for example, to his needs and luxuries, and these are many and various. He is a producer of a little, and

that of one kind : for he is either in the main an engineer or a poet or a specialist in some class of production. No man is a specialist in consuming. Indeed, from this point of view, a man seems to be nine-tenths consumer and only one-tenth producer ; and therefore popular journalism supposes that " the public " are in the main consumers and not producers. But this contrast in quantitative terms is misleading. The mere number of the things a man consumes and produces is of no importance. What is important is the value, economic and human, of what he produces and consumes, and the *quality* of the impulse of which each is an embodiment. First, clearly a man can, and generally does, produce a greater value than he consumes, otherwise the majority could not exist ; and, secondly, since there is more of himself in his products than in his needs, he should be conceived as mainly a producer. In the same way, although reason fills a small time in life, yet that little is more important than long hours of sleep, and reason is more characteristic of man than sleep. Finally, it is usually felt now that a man is free in his choice as a consumer, but as a producer he is compelled unwillingly to do what he does for a livelihood. If this were the nature of things, it would show that the real man is the consumer ; but in fact there is nothing disagreeable in itself in the exercise of energy which we call work, and work done unwillingly is generally bad. All men, in fact, admit that a man's true work is what he can do best, and what, therefore, he likes best to do. It is not, therefore, the nature of work, but the social structure within which work is confined, which seems to prove a man not to be primarily a producer.

The public, then, is not the consumer, but the producer,

and society should be organized in view of the different kinds of production. That is to say, the natural and inevitable result of an organized production would be a society organized on the basis of what may be called guilds of craftsmen. Within any one group of organized producers will be both intellectuals and hand-workers, and the classes, if they are so called in the new order, will be engineers, physicians, poets, musicians, transport workers, builders, and other such. Among the physicians will be the scavengers and the inspectors of health ; among the builders will be the bricklayers and the architects. The actual grouping of the occupations within the classes and the structure of the groups will be the result of compromise and accident ; but a general conception will guide the differentiations accepted and the relations established.

The better social and industrial order is described, in the form of a myth, in *News from Nowhere*, and there also one finds indications of the method by which Morris thought such a new order would be brought into existence. In the manner of a future historian who looks back from the better days into ours, the description is given as follows : " The Combined Workers watched the situation with mingled hope and anxiety. . . . ' The insatiable greed of the lower classes must be repressed ' —' The people must be taught a lesson '—these were the sacramental phrases ' among the reactionists." A Committee of Public Safety was elected by the workers, and then came shooting of crowds by the soldiers, and finally plain civil war. Meantime the producers were organizing the supplies for their own side, and the Government was distracted and undecided. The war lasted two years ; and then—the Revolution was successful.

It is a picture of despair for anyone who believes that social institutions might be radically transformed without violence; but clearly Morris thought that the classes who hold power would not abdicate without a trial of strength. Perhaps what he has written as history may be a form of prophecy. The end, however, of such a war as he described could not be so calm as he imagined; for war would breed ineradicable violence in the relations of man to man within any society. The method, therefore, though men may be driven to use it, is altogether and hopelessly mistaken.

The problem of the instruments by which the new world is to be built still remains: and in this matter, too, Morris saw more clearly than other revolutionaries. It is unreasonable to complain of the injuries suffered by the working classes and in the same breath to claim that they are capable of full citizenship. It is only too plain that men and women who have from their birth been deprived of opportunities for development are now undeveloped. Put the world in their hands, and, as they know themselves, they will make a chaos of it.

What, then, is to be done? Ought these undeveloped and injured people to leave it to the few who may be competent to consider and to act for the good of all? They ought *not*—it cannot be too conclusively stated. That the people do, in fact, leave responsibility and action to their favourites or their deluders is true; but the fact does not disprove the principle. There is a duty for each class: for the exceptional or the competent it is a duty always to abdicate when the common folk so desire, and for the common folk it is a duty to take up whenever they can the responsibility and the exercise of power. That does not imply either that the competent few are

interim dictators, or that the common folk are to seize all power. The transition to democracy is, if not slow, at least complex: many small attempts, some failures, and an achievement here and there of this or that group of common folk, until the whole people control all the institutions under which they live.

CHAPTER V

TOLSTOI AND CHRISTIANITY

TOLSTOI was a great revolutionary who hated revolutionaries, a great artist who reviled art, and a great Christian who repudiated the beliefs and practices of all who pride themselves on being most Christian. The apparent contradictions in his work are the most valuable indications of the character of his thought; for he leaves nothing uncriticized. His earnestness and vigour sometimes misled him both in his loves and his hatreds: but even when he maintains contradictory doctrines he is so fervently in earnest that he seems to justify his mistakes. He felt the extremes of human passion; and he had experience both of war and society and of a religious seclusion. He speaks sometimes the language of simple evangelism, sometimes that of modern economics, sometimes that of the historian. And, above all, he is an accomplished literary artist: for it is impossible to forget the Tolstoi of *Anna Karenina* and *Resurrection* in reading *What We Ought to Do, What I Believe*, and *The Kingdom of God*. In all his work there is an exactness of perception and an intensity of feeling which make the treatises and religious tracts as effective as the romances. The romances, however, will be omitted here in the discussion of his attitude towards social problems; although it will be assumed that the

intensity of the romances indicates the driving force which lies within all Tolstoi's argument.

His value to us now is in that he had the supreme ability to sweep aside subtleties and pretences and to grasp fundamental issues. The issues which we shall have to face are fundamental. What is on trial now is not merely the private ownership of coal-mines, but the whole system of profit and labour; not the forms of government, but the nature of all government; not the abuses of political and ecclesiastical power, but the State itself and the Church. With regard to all such issues Tolstoi is a revolutionary; and his argument for revolution in social organization and individual life is based upon his belief that the best life attained under the present system by those who can choose what life they will is barren and bitter. Tolstoi's first conscious effort as a revolutionary, therefore, was aimed at discovering why the life of the rich and powerful was not satisfying; for he had lived the ordinary life of his class, and he was himself profoundly dissatisfied.

To say that no satisfaction is to be had from riches and power in the present system of society involves a large assumption. It involves that the genuine man, as compared with the beast on two legs in trousers or skirts, is not to be satisfied with garbage or indigestible gold. It involves, in fact, a belief as to what makes a man human: and it is true only of such a genuine man that he is not satisfied with riches and power. The statement, therefore, that riches and power are barren and bitter would not be disproved if we found that they were desired and valued in possession by all the inhabitants of the world: for none of them may be what Tolstoi meant by a man. It would still be possible to argue

that riches do not satisfy men, because of the small spark of dissatisfaction which accompanies the most savage success. But there was personal experience in the argument. The simple fact was that what was valued in his world did not satisfy Tolstoi himself, and, by a legitimate extension of his experience, he concluded that, as his own humanity revolted against the accepted standards of life, they were mistaken from the point of view of anyone who gave free play to his humanity.

Further, if riches do not satisfy, the consciousness of their inevitable accompaniment, the poverty and distress of others, adds to the revulsion against the established system. The suffering and premature death of thousands is not only terrible for them; it makes the social system unendurable to anyone with imagination. The revulsion felt by the imaginative is expressed in the attempt to repudiate responsibility: but that cannot logically be accomplished. All of us are guilty. "We live as though there were no connection between the dying laundress, the prostitute of fourteen years, the toilsome manufacture of cigarettes by women, the strained, intolerable, insufficiently fed toil of old women and children around us,—we live as though there were no connection between this and our own lives."[1] Nevertheless, as we are all dependent upon it, we all, in a sense, support the system which produces this suffering: mere charity makes the system no better, and therefore men of imagination who cannot repudiate their responsibility are compelled to work for a radical transformation of what the unimaginative take for granted.

The evil for which revolution is a remedy is of two kinds. It is, first, the universal rule of force, and

[1] *What we ought to do*, p. 165.

secondly, the falsity of the ideals which guide the practical life of men. Society has developed and Christianity has been accepted long ago ; but " The organization of society remains in its principal features just as much an organization based on violence as it was one thousand years ago." [1] Everywhere men are cowed by force or compelled to use violence themselves, whether as soldiers or as judges and agents of authority. All government rests on force, and force, whether of the few or of the many, makes the character of society. The strongest control—whether they are strongest industrially, politically, or physically. And the relation of one government to another is based again upon force. And yet in spite of all the consecration of force in society men find it difficult to exercise violence for themselves and on their own responsibility. " Only that cruelty is exercised (thanks to our complicated social machinery) which can be so divided among a number that none shall bear the sole responsibility or recognize how unnatural all cruelty is. Some make laws, others apply them ; others, again, drill their fellow-creatures into habits of discipline—of senseless passive obedience ; and these same disciplined men in their turn do violence to others—kill without knowing why or wherefore." [2]

This rule of force is an evil, and Tolstoi argues that Christianity itself forbids the use of force. For the purpose of the argument here, however, his historical theory may be omitted. Some who professed Christianity have refused to use force, others have maintained that Christianity supports the use of armies, navies, police, law-courts, and all the apparatus of social force. The arguments generally turn upon the comparison and

[1] *Kingdom of God*, p. 381. [2] *What I Believe*, p. 48.

the diverse interpretations of certain texts of the New Testament; and it is well known that any possible opinion can be found expressed in some text of the Bible.

> Est liber hic in quo quaerit sua dogmata quisque
> Invenit et pariter in illo dogmata quisque sua.

It does not concern us here to decide whether it is fair historically to say that Christianity is opposed to the rule of force; for in any case the rule of force is clearly opposed to the organization of society by voluntary co-operation. The rule of force is, however, supported by the very institutions which might be supposed to be its opponents, and the chief of these is the organized Church. The officials of organized Christianity in every land are, therefore, the most dangerous enemies of Christianity itself. "The Churches . . . are institutions opposed to Christianity. There is not only nothing in common between the Churches as such and Christianity except the name, but they represent two principles fundamentally opposed and antagonistic to one another."[1] Everywhere the officials of the Church maintain the established system of government, and when they seek to reform it they do not question its bases nor its right to allegiance. "The farthest limit of inconsistency with Christianity is universal compulsory military service. It is usually supposed that . . . this is a passing phenomenon. This is absolutely incorrect. The basis of authority is bodily violence: the possibility of applying bodily violence to people is provided above all by an army. The rivalry of states forced them to compulsory service, since by that means the greatest number of

[1] *Kingdom of God*, p. 96.

soldiers is obtained at the least expense, and by this means all citizens have become their own oppressors." [1]

The rule of force is evil because it degrades men by preventing the use of their sense of justice. It blinds the soul. The only standard which can be applied by the rule of force is that of comparative strength, and comparative strength is beside the point when we are thinking, as we should if we are men and not beasts, of right and wrong. Secondly, the use of force, even for the sake of what is good, corrupts what is good: for good has a power of its own, and if it borrows another sort of power it abdicates its own. Thirdly, the use of force is obstructive and repressive; it cannot originate, it can at best only correct. It is not creative or vitalizing.

The rule of force, however, is not the only evil for which revolution is a remedy. Tolstoi would admit that even if the use of force were no longer common there would still be an evil perhaps more fundamental. That is the commonly accepted ideal of life, which, in fact, is the ultimate reason for the common use of force. The ideal is the possession of power over others, whether by wealth, or by the crude exercise of violence, or by terror, or by the mere jungle-law of competition. The desire for personal domination over other persons and for the domination of one group over other groups is what corrodes society: and the orthodox, self-styled revolutionary is not always free from that desire. A mere transference of authority from one class to another would leave society still enslaved to the desire for domination over others. We need not search for domination

[1] *Kingdom of God*, p. 235 *et seq.* The sentences are taken from different pages in order to condense the argument.

in throne-rooms: for even a back-parlour in a poor man's home may show a husband tyrannizing or parents overbearing to children. The spirit of domination is everywhere, and no external changes can destroy it. Until that desire is eradicated, we cannot make the next step forward; and no economic theorizing, no new system of government, no more subtle intelligence will destroy the desire for domination. That is why Tolstoi was so insistent in his statement that the only genuine revolution was religious. "The fundamental cause of the impending revolution, as of all past and future revolutions, is a religious one";[1] and therefore no transformation of society will be adequate which stops short of a new religious vision. A survey of all the modern world reveals no part which is not corrupted by the practice of a savage ideal of life and character.

Looking round, then, for valid standards of life and for a guide to practice which would not leave a man starving in a desert, Tolstoi found them—everywhere! The true life was indicated in the very professions of those who followed most earnestly after the false! This is the supreme contradiction of existing society. It is Christian by profession, and not even pagan, but barbaric and savage, in practice. Thus, in seeking to escape from the absurd practices of men, one need not seek light in obscure and difficult regions of thought: all that is needed is to take seriously what every one admits to be true. This is not now done, but the "time will come—it is already coming—when the Christian principles of equality and fraternity, community of property, non-resistance of evil by force, will appear just as natural and simple as the principles of family and social life seem to us

[1] *End of the Age*, p. 20.

now."[1] The Sermon on the Mount was never intend
as a guide to the life of a cloister. It contains practi
guidance for everyday life, and the very manner in whi
the Law of Retribution—"an eye for an eye"—is co
trasted with the new Law of Love shows that one pra
tical rule is being substituted for another. The whole
society is affected by this contradiction between t
practices and the professions of men, and the dim p
ception of this contradiction adds to the bitterness
each man's life.

"Whatever the opinions and degree of education o
man of to-day, whatever his shade of liberalism, whate
his school of philosophy, or of science, or of economi
however ignorant or superstitious he may be, every m
of the present day knows that all men have an equal rig
to life and the good things of life, and that one set
people are no better nor worse than another, that all a
equal. Every one knows this beyond doubt; every o
feels it in his whole being. Yet at the same time eve
one sees all round him the division of men into two cas
—the one labouring, oppressed, poor, and suffering; t
other idle, oppressing, luxurious, and profligate. A
every one not only sees this, but voluntarily or involu
tarily, in one way or another, he takes part in maintaini
this distinction which his conscience condemns. And
cannot help suffering from the consciousness of t
contradiction and his share in it.

"Whether he be master or slave, the man of to-d
cannot help constantly feeling the painful opposit
between his conscience and actual life, and the miser
resulting from it.

"The toiling masses, the immense majority of manki

[1] *Kingdom of God*, p. 160.

who are suffering under the incessant, meaningless, and hopeless toil and privation in which their whole life is swallowed up, still find their keenest suffering in the glaring contrast between what is and what ought to be, according to all the beliefs held by themselves, and those who have brought them to that condition and keep them in it. . . .

"The labourer of the present day would not cease to suffer even if his toil were much lighter than that of the slave of ancient times, even if he gained an eight-hour working day and a wage of three dollars a day. For he is working at the manufacture of things which he will not enjoy, working not at his own will for his own benefit, but through necessity, to satisfy the desires of luxurious and idle people in general, and for the profit of a single rich man, the owner of a factory or workshop in particular. And he knows that all this is going on in a world in which it is a recognized scientific principle that labour alone creates wealth, and that to profit by the labour of others is immoral, dishonest, and punishable by law; in a world, moreover, which professes to believe Christ's doctrine that we are all brothers, and that true merit and dignity is to be found in serving one's neighbour, not in exploiting him. All this he knows, and he cannot but suffer keenly from the sharp contrast between what is and what ought to be. . . .

"The man of the so-called educated classes lives in still more glaring inconsistency and suffering. Every educated man, if he believes in anything, believes in the brotherhood of all men, or at least he has a sentiment of humanity, or else of justice, or else he believes in science. And all the while he knows that his whole life is framed

on principles in direct opposition to it all, to all the principles of Christianity, humanity, justice, and science.

"He knows that all the habits in which he has been brought up, and which he could not give up without suffering, can only be satisfied through the exhausting, often fatal, toil of oppressed labourers—that is, through the most obvious and brutal violation of the principles of Christianity, humanity and justice, and even of science (that is, economic science). He advocates the principles of fraternity, humanity, justice and science, and yet he lives so that he is dependent on the oppression of the working classes, which he denounces, and his whole life is based on the advantages gained by their oppression. Moreover, he is directing every effort to maintaining this state of things so flatly opposed to all his beliefs. . . .

"The men of the higher dominating classes whose conscience is naturally not sensitive or has become blunted, if they don't suffer through conscience, suffer from fear and hatred. They are bound to suffer. They know all the hatred of them existing, and inevitably existing, in the working classes. They are aware that the working classes know that they are deceived and exploited, and that they are beginning to organize themselves to shake off oppression and revenge themselves on their oppressors. The higher classes see the unions, the strikes, the May-day celebrations, and feel the calamity that is threatening them, and their terror passes into an instinct of self-defence and hatred. They know that if for one instant they are worsted in the struggle with their oppressed slaves, they will perish, because the slaves are exasperated, and their exasperation is grow-

ing more intense with every day of oppression. The oppressors, even if they wished to do so, could not make an end to oppression. They know that they themselves will perish directly they even relax the harshness of their oppression. And they do not relax it, in spite of all their pretended care for the welfare of the working classes, for the eight-hour day, for regulation of the labour of minors and of women, for savings-banks and pensions. All that is humbug, or else simple anxiety to keep the slave fit to do his work. But the slave is still a slave, and the master who cannot live without a slave is less disposed to set him free than ever. . . ."[1]

Put into definite and concise terms, this Christianity in which Tolstoi finds the true practical guide to life includes the following principles: to live in peace with all men, to be chaste, to take no oaths, to offer no resistance to evil, to love our enemies. But these are less clear than the actual reference which Tolstoi himself makes to the Sermon on the Mount. These sentences contain, in his opinion, the fundamentals: "Resist not evil, but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also: and if any man would go to law with thee and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go with him one mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."[2]

All our inherited inclinations are against our taking such words seriously. "Educated people of the upper

[1] *Kingdom of God*, pp. 105 seq.

[2] Matthew, v. 38-42, quoted in the *End of the Age* and in different parts of Tolstoi's treatises.

classes are trying to stifle the ever-growing sense of the necessity of transforming the existing social order. But . . . life brings them to the limit beyond which they cannot go."[1] And therefore a time comes when there is no third choice: it must be either revolution or reaction towards unashamed savagery. The conclusion, then, is that if men lived as they themselves admit they ought to live, their lives would be less embittered and society would be transformed into the form of the Kingdom of God.[2] If such a revolution were accomplished, not only would the happiness of all be much increased, but all the excellent activities of men at present corrupted would have full development. Art, which is now a superficial entertainment of spare moments, chiefly reserved for the rich, would be an illumination for all men. Science, which now serves any master, but chiefly the rich and chiefly for the destruction of men in war or industry, would serve only the progress of human happiness.[3] "Science and art are as necessary as bread and water, and even more necessary. . . . The true science is the knowledge of the good of all men. The true art is the expression of that knowledge."[4]

By what process are we to reach the new order of society? So far as the conception of what should occur can be clearly stated, it is by the increase of an orderly and determined refusal to obey the established authorities. These authorities will use force in order to compel obedience; but some kinds of obedience cannot be had even by compulsion, and if many refuse to obey, the

[1] *Kingdom of God*, p. 234.
[2] Cf. Clutton Brock, *What is the Kingdom of God?*
[3] Cf. Moulton, *Science and War*.
[4] *What We Ought to Do*, p. 378.

position of established authority is no longer tenable. For example, force may compel men to enter factories or coal-mines, but it cannot compel them to produce commodities; and although a few can be frightened by seeing the torture applied to others who refuse to obey, the very agents of authority begin to revolt when the torture is too extreme or the refusal too widespread. There is a limit to the number of victims which tyranny can use to advantage; and most tyrannies have fallen because that limit ceased to be observed. "Violent revolution has outlived its time. . . . Freedom, not imaginary but real, is attained not by barricades or murders, not by any kind of new institution introduced by force, but only by the cessation of obedience to any human authority whatever."[1] Thus the true revolution is brought about by the refusal to obey.

Obviously this is only the destructive side of the policy suggested; and Tolstoi has appeared to many to have nothing more than non-resistance to urge. That is a mistake. It is true that he was chiefly concerned to show that justice could not be established by force. The "liberals" and revolutionaries of his day believed in killing tyrants or in "wars to end war." But he says: "The progressive movement of humanity does not proceed from the better elements in society seizing power and making those who are subject to them better by forcible means, as both conservatives and revolutionists imagine. It proceeds first and principally from the fact that all men in general are advancing steadily and undeviatingly towards a more and more conscious assimilation of the Christian theory of life."[2] The real soul of the true revolutionary method is organized and

[1] *End of the Age*, p. 31. [2] *Kingdom of God*, p. 354.

voluntary co-operation, mutual service, although "t
accept the law of mutual service without acceptin
the commandment of non-resistance is the same a
building an arch without a keystone."[1] He disagree
profoundly with the belief in violent revolution, bu
he has not repudiated revolution, and, in fact, h
stated, although with less elaboration, the other an
positive beliefs in which he agreed with more orthodo
revolutionaries.

The policy of non-resistance is completed by the polic
of socialized labour : but the mere commentary on Tolst
is comparatively unimportant. Whether fully expresse
or only implied, the policy of joint labour is part of th
means for bringing about the new order. If only passiv
disobedience were used, the old order might indeed b
dissolved, but the men and women concerned, whethe
in subjection or in authority, would perish of starvatio
and cold. Therefore, while we refuse to obey, we mus
also organize production for ourselves ; and as it is im
possible to supply the needs of the inhabitants of a cit
except by using the mechanism of the old order, w
must simplify our needs in order to be able to suppl
them without recourse to the order which we wish t
destroy. Therefore we must return to the simpler li
of the smaller units, villages or the countryside : an
men must learn to be more self-dependent before the
can co-operate successfully to substitute for the existin
state and modern industry the new world which
desired.

The end for which all this is done is a new social orde
and clearly men will not be persuaded to use the mea
suggested until they perceive in definite outlines th

[1] *End of the Age*, p. 33.

character of the society which would result. How, then, is the ideal conceived?

What is *not* to be found there is well stated. There will be no government resting on force, no state so organized that the few exploit the common folk. And since, in Tolstoi's language, *all* government rests on force and *every* state is a class-state, government and the state will disappear. There will be no law-courts, no armies and navies, and no churches with priesthoods. This appears to leave society barren of familiar features and to add no new features to it. The new order, however, will be the natural development of what is simple and human in the midst of the present anarchy and violence. In the first place, the order in society will proceed from the free choice of the individuals who compose it. Men ask, says Tolstoi, how they will live without the state: and he replies that they will live as they do now, except that they will not continue to be quite so foolish.[1] What will be removed will not be order, but the obstacles to the growth of order: "a mutual order, not coercive,"[2] will arise out of the ruins of the rule of force.

Secondly, all men will work. There will be opportunity for all who wish to do any work, and no opportunity for those who wish to avoid it; whereas at present many seek for work and are unable to find it, while others wish to avoid working, and, if they are of the richer class, society assists them to be useless. The natural energy of man and the enjoyment of simple things will be enough to promote the production of all that is necessary for true civilization.

Thirdly, men will seek to help other men, and com-

[1] *End of the Age*, p. 70. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 35.

petition will disappear. This, instead of decreasing the energy expended in public service, will increase it, for although some men will not exert themselves unless they fear to be overcome by others, the great men of the past, like Christ and Socrates, certainly did not work in competition with others and yet produced the best possible results. So when more men are like these great men of the past, they will work without needing the spur of jealousy or fear.

Finally, the groups of men which are now deformed by the states of the world will naturally be friendly. The sense of the group will not dominate or destroy the sense of the value of individual men. We shall have passed beyond group religion and state religion into Christianity. We shall no longer think of England, France or Russia as the mere state organization subduing many peoples, and there will be more time for the real English to live their own lives when they are no longer induced to waste them in oppressing other peoples.[1] "I believe," wrote Tolstoi in 1905,[2] "that at this very hour the great revolution begins, the revolution prepared for two thousand years in the Christian world—the revolution which will substitute for the corrupt form of Christianity, and for the regime of domination arising from it, the true Christianity, the basis of equality among men and of true liberty for which all reasonable beings hope." This was written after the disaster of the Russo-Japanese War and after the slaughter of the unarmed crowd in St. Petersburg in January, 1905, by the soldiery of the Czar. Tolstoi believed that the Russian people would first show the world the beginnings of the true

[1] *End of the Age.* The reference is to pp. 49, 51, etc.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

revolution, which would not be the mere substitution of one force for another, but the supersession of all force in the relations of men. And from Russia, in his opinion, would come, not merely political ability, but a practical and genuine Christianity.

Whether his prophecies come true or not, clearly Russia is showing the world something hitherto unknown. The organization of the Russian government may be more influenced by Marx than by Tolstoi, but Tolstoi did the preparatory work in destroying the ancient glorification of war. The humane scepticism of common folk when they are urged to seek the glory of their rulers and their so-called country, has been most clearly expressed by Tolstoi: and this scepticism it was which corroded the Russian army when the Czar and his courtiers expected them to fire upon the revolting populace in 1917. Tolstoi is still regarded as the most dangerous of all revolutionaries because he quite definitely aims at destroying the subservience of men in armies and navies: and governments still rely upon force—ultimately armed force—and not upon the approval of the governed.

Whatever the position given to Tolstoi, clearly we have to reckon with his interpretation of Christianity: for a new phase of the development of religious thought is beginning to appear. It matters very little whether it be called Christian; but some of the inspiration is undoubtedly due to the Gospels. The age of theology is finished; and those who still argue about the interpretation of texts are few and unimportant. What is now the religion of quite determined and practical men is subversive of all the power and pageantry of State and Church: and it is so subversive because it aims at an individual life and a social organization which is

not based upon the desire for wealth and power and upon the conflict of individuals or of groups. There may be for many years to come very few persons who know the alternative and work for it, but such inspirations have sometimes suddenly become popular: and if the next step in civilization has not been made, although long ago it was possible, that would not prove that it can never be made.

The revolution which establishes co-operation and friendliness, not so much in the laws as in the customs and habits of mind of men, will be the most permanently beneficial of all revolutions. The truth is that this ideal has been ineffective because it has been seriously believed to be poetical rather than practical: for even the advocates of Christianity have been ashamed of anything which could distinguish it from totemism or patriotism. Clearly the ideal could not be accepted as a guide to life if the fundamental principles upon which social life now rests are to be maintained. Christianity, in Tolstoi's sense of the word, could only be practical at the cost of a revolution much more radical than any imagined by Karl Marx. And it was tacitly assumed by all who argued against supposing that the Sermon on the Mount meant what it appears to mean that the established customs of men are in the nature of things. Of course it would be absurd to guide our practice by a principle which involved that men had three legs or could jump over mountains: and the ecclesiastical apologists for the established order have always supposed that to do without private property in land or to work for anything else but private gain would be as absurd as having three legs. What has been defective is not goodwill, but imagination. Men have been good enough for anything; but they

have had only the intelligence of sheep and the emotion of somnolent cows. The world delays to move forward because the next practical step cannot be clearly seen by our dull eyes.

Apart, however, from a general criticism of the Christian ideal for the individual and society, the next step will depend upon our judgment of the proper application of the general principles of mutual service. Two important problems have to be solved : one is in regard to the organization which should be promoted, the other in regard to the persons who will establish the new order.

It is to be feared that when Tolstoians say that mutual service is natural, they mean that a new organization of society will be arrived at without intellectual effort. The theory of anarchism implies that if men are left " to themselves " they will not obstruct the activities of other men. Tolstoi sees further than this : for he sees that it all depends upon the nature of the " selves " to whom such freedom is given. But even that is not enough. The admiration for what is simple and natural is often foolishly combined with a suspicion of intellectual ability and administrative competence : and yet clearly no new organization can develop out of simple goodwill. After all, reason is as " natural " to man as any love for his fellows. The organization, therefore, which should be substituted for the present social anarchy and violence is one in which reason has its natural place. The good simple folk must act as folk less simple can persuade them is best : and this involves that the so-called Christian principles must be applied in detail by men competent to understand the intricacy of human relationship in society : but no one can be so competent unless he has close experience of the present social system.

Hence arises the second problem, Can a man preserve his idealism while acting practically in the midst of the very system which his ideal would destroy? The whole history of Christianity seems to show that it cannot be done: and Tolstoi at the end of his life concluded that a man with his ideals should withdraw from all contact with the world. If this plan were adopted, two camps would be formed: the world might be left to the unidealistic, and that would do no harm; but the others would be left without practical experience of a complex society, and that would weaken the idealists. Indeed, if incompetent idealists had control, the result might be confusion. St. Bernard and St. Francis might have failed to organize the supply of food and clothing, even if they had persuaded all men to follow their advice. Buddha's advice might have destroyed the race.

On the other hand, idealists in contact with established society have been by so much less idealistic. They too have accepted wealth and power, and—they have forgotten or "modified" their ideal. The problem is very complex, and no general solution can be offered: for it is largely a personal problem. But the ideal of mutual service as a basis for social organization can never be applied until the idealist can control established society without being himself contaminated.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT IS REVOLUTION?

THE majority of men see more easily what is dreadful than what is hopeful in revolution. They dread the unknown : they love what is established or customary. And yet revolutions have occurred. Some, it is true, have been very limited or slow in their operation ; and these may have come about without fearful premonitions, perhaps almost unnoticed by the average man until their consummation. But some revolutions have been sudden and destructive.

Can it be, then, that the majority sometimes tire of custom ? Are there agitators about, stirring the average man out of his acquiescence ? Or do a few on occasion master the majority and make of their desire for change a force stronger than the restraint of custom ? All these may be partial explanations, but there is another more important than any of these.

Deeper down than the turmoil of agitation and of the conflict for power there are the ideals of men, working to effervescence in the souls of prophets and issuing in indictments of evil or flashing into visions of a better future. These ideals are motive forces which operate only when they are shared by many : and they are of many kinds. Some of them are little more than meagre desires for an improvement in external circumstances : they are satisfied when men obtain a little more osten-

tatious wealth or a little more food or a little more wages. Some of them are so vague that they can be put off for realization to "the other side of the grave." But some of these ideals are powerful in the actual world, and so radical that men moved by them cannot be satisfied with reforms. These make, and always have made, revolution. They are expressed by great revolutionaries; but the passion so expressed is a popular and general desire, which is indeed more inflamed or made more effective by the expression given to it, although it does not originate with the revolutionary writer or speaker. His work is the sublimation of a general discontent and a general vision of a better world, seen dimly and yet seen well enough by the many.

But if revolutions are thus popular in origin, how comes it that the average man is so much afraid of dangers ahead? Largely, perhaps, because a conflict of ideals appears to the majority of men to be a conflict of persons, and anything terrible may be expected of our opponents. Humanity in the mass is excitable and timid: and most men easily catch the contagion of fear. Therefore both those who hope for and those who hate revolution tend to explain what they feel by reference to certain bogeys. Such explanations cannot be true. Revolutions do not occur because of wicked agitators or wicked capitalists; and bogeys may be left, therefore, by the historian to the journalists and the politicians and the clergymen and the old ladies. But it is easy enough to rouse the crowd to an attack on any bogey. Sometimes the bogey is dressed as a long-haired, wild-looking, lean and ill-clothed young man: it used to be called "Anarchist" or "Socialist"; it is now more terrifying if it is called "Bolshevik." Really the bogey

represents the most subservient of all classes, the minor artist, the hanger-on in the drawing-room, the youth of indiscriminate passions who imagines that it is important to write or to draw standing on one's head. But the popular journalist and the old ladies have seen him about; and they have heard that Bolsheviks are about: what more natural than that that strange being should be a Bolshevik? The crowd will cheerfully kill such men.

Reactionaries, however, have not a monopoly in bogeys. One such bogey is dressed as a fat man with a large watch-chain and a tall hat. It is said by the revolutionary to be a capitalist, despite the fact that most capitalists are known to be thin and dyspeptic. This bogey is really modelled on the figure of a Labour Leader aspiring to the O.B.E., but it will do to burn on a revolutionary bonfire, forestalling the dawn which assists so frequently the rhetoric of revolutionaries. Thus it comes about that the average man is terrified.

The word "revolution" may have many meanings, and for the purposes of controversy it can be usefully employed by the same person in contradictory senses. Thus the professed opponents of all revolution can take it for granted that it involves the cutting of throats and at the same time the control of society by intellectual fanatics. The professed revolutionary can also do a little to confuse the issue by calling on us to shoot capitalists and at the same time to love our enemies. These little disturbances, however, in the development of language need not prevent the use of the word "revolution" in a limited and definite sense. If the use of the word by Rousseau, Morris, and the others mentioned is to be our guide, we can arrive at a fairly precise concep-

tion of a particular kind of social change. It is taken by them to mean *a sudden and radical change in social organization*. Its meaning is indicated, first, by reference to certain past events commonly called revolutions, and, secondly, by an analysis of those ideals which are the grounds of their criticism of contemporary life.

With regard to past events, the use of the word "revolution" to mean a sudden and radical change precludes, except in the metaphorical sense, its application, for example, to the Renaissance or the establishment of Christianity. These were fundamental changes, but not sudden. On the other hand, the sudden change in August, 1914, was not radical in so far as the life of nations was already based on war, although some inevitable consequences of the situation were not understood: the actions of men in most European countries were suddenly changed, but their fundamental attitude, and even the forms of social organization, remained the same.

It is doubtful how great a change must occur in order to be fairly called radical. For example, the English Revolution of 1688 was hardly radical enough; and the word "revolution" is therefore not applicable to it. South American "revolutions" are sudden enough, but do not involve social transformation. On the other hand, what the English call the American Revolution and the Americans call the War of Independence was radical enough in the changes it introduced to be called revolutionary.

A legitimate use of the word is in reference to the Industrial Revolution. Life was indeed transformed: and that revolution had also some of the accidental features of all revolutions, for although historians expect broken windows and bloody heads in a revolution, they

have not understood how revolutionary even in this regard the new industry was. The sufferers were the children and the poor. The slaughter was as great as in any Terror; but the killing was done by slow torture which no gentleman suffered, and historians have hitherto been gentlemen. What makes a revolution, however, is not the death of many, but the change, both sudden and radical, which it initiates.

The most startling of all revolutions, and therefore those which have attracted the word to themselves, were the French Revolution of 1789 and the Russian Revolutions of 1917. These are the typical revolutions of modern history, being both sudden and radical in the transformation effected: and both of them spread beyond the lands in which they originated. It is not, however, necessary here to analyse their common features, for they are taken simply as examples of sudden and radical social change. The violences and sufferings with which they were accompanied are not essential to their character as revolutionary, since such distress has been common in many social circumstances, wars and tyrannies, which cannot be classed as revolutions. It was believed by the writers mentioned above that we are not yet well enough developed socially to contrive and carry out social changes without undue friction: but even that fact would not identify revolution with violence.

The point of chief interest here, however, is that revolutions are in part the effects of social idealism; and the conception of the new social order aimed at in revolution is therefore one of the grounds for our understanding of the word. It is an old and well-corrected belief that Rousseau inspired the French Revolution and that Karl Marx has inspired the Bolsheviks: but even that

limited historical truth is not fundamental to the argument here. The interest here is in the future. The ideals of dead revolutionaries are important to us living men because they are motive forces, stirring the hearts and sometimes confusing the heads of ourselves or our contemporaries. We need, therefore, to have a conception of revolution not simply derived from past events such as the French Revolution, but derived rather from the ideals of a new social order which are still active among us. These ideals imply that a radical and rapid change in social organization is desirable: and if this is not clearly expressed except by the great writers of the past, the reason may be only that the desire of the majority at present cannot cure their dumbness. Their language is action. But the ideals dumbly accepted even to-day by many and clearly expressed by the few imply that a change is desired which will destroy social evil and set up a new order based upon new moral principles.

It is not perhaps altogether fair to imply that revolution initiates a change for the better. This seems to make revolution necessarily good, and the common meaning of the word does not imply this. We call it a revolution when in a primitive society one rascal turns out another and takes his place in control of men's lives; and yet this is no betterment. Nevertheless, the particular aspect of revolution considered here is its connection with an ideal expressed by prophets, and for this reason it is legitimate to imply that the sudden and radical change would be a change for the better. How, then, can this change be described?

It will, in the first place, be a destruction of obvious evils, which may indeed disturb some customs not altogether evil. It is implied in what has been said so far

that a radical and rapid change of social organization or habit may occur again and in other lands as it has occurred in the past. The record of the past has been referred to with an eye to future possibilities, and, as we have seen, there are premonitions in the breasts of old ladies and dreadful imaginings on the lips of agitators. Meantime the steady current of normal life seems hardly stirred. The majority are not deeply moved. The agitators and the old ladies certainly misread the signs: for there may be no blood and thunder. Nevertheless, he would be blind who did not foresee that great changes will probably occur in the near future. Even the silence of the majority indicates to anyone acquainted with history the coming of a new era. The sturdy faith in what is established has faded or survives hardly even in the Foreign Offices of the world; the majority are prepared to believe that much evil exists which may be destroyed without overturning the universe. And when old faiths are faded, when new things are regarded commonly as possible and not too terrifying—the time has come.

What, then, is believed by the idealists of revolution to be wrong? Very little short of everything. We are not so complacent as our ancestors of the Darwinian age. Evolution is not believed by us to be justified because it has produced—us. We hope for something a little better, and not a few believe the human race to be still uncivilized. This may be their description of humanity: An amusing race, with engaging quaintness and generous impulses, but in the main still nearly allied to the anthropoid apes. The dominant preoccupation is with food and clothing: the dominant impulse to injure some one else in getting them. Our houses are holes or

caves. Our dress is the latest variation in the fig-leaf, covering nakedness in order on suitable occasions to discover it. The truth may be, indeed, that we are at the beginning, and not at the end, of human history; and it may be that we have not yet discovered or applied the fundamental principles of humane life. The individual is limited in intelligence, imagination, and generosity; for he cannot think coherently or imagine new things freely.

But these are said by the revolutionary to be trivial evils by comparison with the evils of social organization and social habit. Here we are brutes—minus the guide of brutes, instinct—and therefore it is an insult to the brute to compare us in our armed nations and our exploiting groups to other living things. The collection of accidental habits which form what we call our social organization produces poverty and war, the two greatest evils of which any society has had experience. These involve not merely individual suffering, but incredible incompetence, waste of thought and of physical energy, lack of the necessaries and amenities of life and many other more intangible results. Religion is so chaotic that the religious are chiefly engaged in attacking one another: every state is so planned as to gain power by the loss of order and liberty in other states; industry is in the control of bands of robbers in a jungle of ignorance and prejudice.

These evils in individual character and in society are nor merely superficial accidents in what is fundamentally good. They strike at the very roots of all life; and although what is good is equally fundamental in man and society, the conflict is so deep down that it is reasonably believed to be unavoidable without a fundamental

change of the whole situation. This does not mean that men must cease to wear clothes or to produce goods. No one believes that the world and man, or even that man's habits, are altogether bad; and even the followers of Schopenhauer have never proved that life is worthless. But the evils we see do involve a desire for a change which is more than superficial and more than a mere reform.

Many now can see so far as this. The social conscience is said to be awakened; and there is unrest even among the normally self-satisfied owners of property. Labour unrest is deprecated: but there is also "capital" unrest about. Very few are genuinely satisfied either with the individual products of our most expensive education or with the society in which we are compelled to live, and the few who are satisfied would be equally and primitively happy in any society.

Some of the evils of our time, however, are more subtle even than these: and here we come to the less obvious visions of prophets; for the agitator and the demagogue cannot make rhetoric out of this, and the reactionary is not agitated about this. It is the inner heart of evil. It is the attitude towards life—one vast evil, or, if its implications are perceived in religion, industry, politics, art, and common life, then—legion.

The anthropoid ape survives less in our clothing, our social chaos, our diseases, and our ignorance, than in our attitude towards life. That attitude is expressed in the desire to "get on," in the appetite for possessions, in the jealousy of others, in the intimidation of children, in the savage attempt to dominate, either in isolation over other man or with a small group matched against another group. No reform of social organization will cure this,

although if our organization were less primitive there might be fewer occasions on which the evil attitude would be effective. But the rule of many savages in the place of the rule of one or few seems so little progressive that many have been led to say that nothing that matters is to be hoped for from revolutionaries. Democracy is not desirable if it only means the control of all by the will of the mob. Therefore revolution, if it is to involve social betterment, must imply a change in the fundamental attitude of men towards individual character and social organization.

Revolution must go as far as this if it is to be worth while. Tolstoi must not be forgotten when Karl Marx speaks. The Rousseau of the "return to nature" should not be repudiated in the name of a social contract setting up political machinery. All the great revolutionaries, indeed, have seen that the problem is moral and not economic; and that therefore the solution must be in the terms of morality. For this reason the revolutionary writers are treated here as prophets, not simply in foretelling what will occur, but in giving inspiration to make it occur. Their works belong, therefore, to a Canon of Social Idealism: and they themselves are the great leaders of men.

These writers, however, know well enough that they are not the greatest of men. The prophet and teacher is revered, but he is not the master. All the great revolutionaries have seen their own limitations, and they have all desired to see a company of men who have mastered the art of life in a mastership impossible for them. Mastership in that art is not like the power of an overlord; nor is it the mere control of self which Stoics admired, for it is more subtle and more far-reach-

ing. Obviously self-control must precede full mastership, since a man must escape from the discursiveness, the dissoluteness, of the intellect and emotions which he inherits from his more primitive ancestors. One must be able to control the mind as the body is controlled by an athlete in the exercise of his skill: and therefore a discipline is the inevitable preliminary to mastership. But the essence of mastery is ease; there must be no sense of effort, and all the faculties of the body and mind must be alive; so that if a revolutionary change in social habits made men masters in the art of life, life would be more various and unaccountable, not more similar and stable. The civilized man would be free in a sense hardly imagined by the rhetoricians who praise liberty as though it could be secured by law or by force of arms. And further, free men thus masters of their own lives would be joyous companions, and not, in the main, producers or consumers or followers of any creed. Society for such men would be the organic result of their companionship; and only in that organic, changeful, and unaccountable world would their finest mastership be exercised. Such a world is quite possible, and there is no reason to suppose that it will not be realized.

We are, in fact, at the beginning, and not at the end, of civilization. The first steps have been slow and hesitating, as was to be expected—for what ages must it have taken while the horse and the dog were developing in distinction from the fish or the protozoa? And why should it not take equally long for the man to develop out of the clothes-horse in Piccadilly or Fifth Avenue? The movement may be forward. The choice, indeed, between forward and backward in the moral sense is only now apparent; for evolution in the scientific sense does

not imply either betterment or the reverse. The horse is no better than the protozoon; for indeed that misnamed father of us all, that Adam without ribs, the protozoon, is excellent and admirable. But when we introduce the idea of good and bad we enter the sphere of choice. If the movement is to be forward, then it must be deliberately turned in that direction. Certain followers of Karl Marx imagine that the new and better order develops without human choice, but that is a mistake. Indeed, the only reason for any interest at all in revolutionary ideals is that progress is not inevitable, and that, if we desire it, we must work for it. As it has been pointed out long ago, we do not yet know what a man will be when at last he appears. There have been hints of it in the past: there are some persons in every age who are at least at moments wholly human, but the sacred thing itself is not yet fully achieved, and it cannot be achieved except by the deliberate will and knowledge sufficient to control the unmoral forces of natural evolution.

At this point uncomfortable memories will perhaps occur of the sayings of that poetic fool, Nietzsche. He rightly perceived that we were at the beginning and not at the end: he was also right in saying that the present inhabitants of our cities are not creditable results of a long process of civilizing. "Man," he said, "is a bridge and not a goal." But he exalted Superman. And the mistake in his diagnosis of fact is combined with a distorted vision of the ideal. First, without quarrelling about words, the elements he found to be characteristic of the inhabitants of our cities are not human; they are, indeed, precisely those elements which are to be found in any beast. Next he takes these very elements

in their positive aspect and exalts them! He condemns submissiveness and then exalts domination; but one is the necessary counterpart of the other, and both are bestial. The frightened deer transfixed by the lion's roar embodies one aspect, the absurdly roaring lion embodies the other; but it is essentially the same principle which rules the lives of both beasts—domination in its two violences, fear and force. As the Greeks said, it is Zeus binding Prometheus by the aid of Kratos and Bia, for one of these two is almost fear. And suppose we did exchange Nietzsche's man for Nietzsche's Superman, we should still be all too near to the anthropoid ape. For these and other similar reasons Nietzsche cannot be included among the prophets of revolution. He is, indeed, the high-priest of reaction: and reactionaries are willing to be violent. Their violences and the suddenness of their *coups d'état* give them a superficial likeness to the more simple-minded revolutionaries; but, as it has been already shown, the mere suddenness of a social change does not make it a revolution if it is not radical.

Attention should also be given to the more detailed characteristics of the revolution indicated by the great revolutionaries. Since most of them were preachers, and not analysts of society, they have not all agreed in regard to these details; but it is fair to say that they all hold that the genuine revolution must involve no confusion and must increase the intelligence devoted to social organization. The change implied in the hope of many men is not a mere destruction. As Morris said, revolution is for the purpose of making men happy, whereas riot makes them miserable, and Mazzini distinguishes riot and insurrection from genuine revolution,

which, he says, is constructive. All the great heralds of revolution have incited men, not to destroy the old, but to establish the new. Utopias, and not indictments, move men to action, and in every age men cease to endure wrongs patiently only when they have a vision of a happier state. The essence of revolution, therefore, is the new social order established and developed thereby; and only reactionaries can suppose that a revolution can be defined otherwise than by reference to its purpose.

The revolution thus indicated must be envisaged more concretely. It should be possible to imagine a fundamental social change which did not show itself in any externals. No noise, no violence, no terror. Social power is transferred and reorganized; new men direct and new men obey. The revolution will have occurred, and yet the ten o'clock train will still leave at ten o'clock, the bread will still be delivered, and it will still be possible to walk the streets with a head unbroken. The best revolutionaries will probably wear white spats, and the graces of convention will not be displaced by unwashed vegetarians, while the power is transferred to the servants of the Commonwealth. This has never yet happened—at least on any large scale or with any lasting consequences. But the future is infinite, and even to-morrow may be altogether unlike to-day. With social skill the new method may be successful. It can come about, however, only on two conditions: first, the introduction of the new order must not be achieved through chaos following on the old; and, secondly, an immense amount of intellectual energy must be devoted to administrative organization. In the first place, if chaos follows on the old order, it seems almost impossible that any step forward can be made without the use of despotic force. But a new

order introduced by force will necessarily be unstable. If it is maintained by force, it will lose credit even though its supporters claim that justice is on their side; if it renounces force, it will be displaced by those who are still willing to use force. If, however, chaos occurs, the only possible step towards order of any sort is by way of force. Chaos discounts persuasion. A mob or crowd, so long as it is orderly, may be persuaded; but if all order is destroyed the use of reason is impossible. Hence it is that early theorists have made order the beginning of political life, and hence also force is said to be the father of all things in so far as it reduces chaos to order.

Order has many meanings. The obvious need for order has often been used as an excuse for the maintenance of the established order; and obviously this is nonsense, since the present established order has not always existed. There have been many different kinds of social order in the past, there are still many in different parts of the world, and there may be in the future innumerable other forms of social organization as orderly or more orderly than our own and yet quite unlike ours. The fact that some form of order is desirable is no argument for the present order as contrasted with another. Society is orderly when, as we say, a man "knows where he is"; he has a certainty of expectations, and his relations with his fellows are comparatively permanent. In more fundamental terms, social order is the result of acceptance, acquiescence, or firm adhesion of many to a common purpose. Social chaos occurs when individuals or groups have at the same time different and inconsistent purposes; or when a number of the same individuals have no fixed purpose and refuse acquiescence in the commonly accepted purpose of the majority of those among whom

they live. There are undeniably some young fools, ignorant of history and politics and without the common human sympathies, who desire chaos. It may give them a chance to vent some private spite, or it may so confuse society that fools may be equal with wise men. But these few violent youths are not important. What is far more important is the almost unnoticed disintegration of society.

The danger of the moment is not revolution, but chaos. Nothing terrible could result from a perfectly organized general strike: but what would bring civilization down would be incoherent strikes for trivial purposes by different small groups with no common plan. Again, in a sense, resolute government with a definite oligarchic policy would be less dangerous than government without fixed principles leading to different and inconsistent administrative measures at different times. Faction among the governed and opportunism in government—if they occur together—would destroy more than could ever be rebuilt again.

But civilization—in the best sense of the word, that civilization, namely, which separates us from the anthropoid apes—is a difficult achievement. The little so far accomplished has been the result of much painful effort; and that little is easily imperilled. Civilization is never safe. Difficult to win, it is not less difficult to keep. For although no barbarians may now be able to destroy our world as the Goths did the Roman world, nevertheless a barbarian is always lurking in the very midst of us. The nineteenth century used to dream of that barbarism and to give it embodiment as a group of ragged and starving members of what used to be called "the lower classes." Sometimes, even now, the inhabitants of a

fashionable club shudder to see the beggar asleep in the park. "Le fantôme des revolutions est dans toutes leurs fêtes."[1]

Barbarism is, however, not so simple a phenomenon. Rags and hunger do not make the barbarian; and civilization has nothing to fear from the poor. The barbarism which may destroy civilization, which is, in fact, at the moment leading us to chaos, is the barbarism of the rich. The anthropoid ape is more nearly related to the well-dressed beast of the club than to the poor man who spares his penny for a poorer. The song of honour includes

> The song of beggars when they throw
> The crust of pity all men owe
> To hungry sparrows in the snow,
> Old beggars, hungry too.

If chaos, therefore, comes upon us because of the distress and disorder in men's lives, civilization will perish in the confusion, not because of the poor, but because those who have its externals have not acquired its essentials. The social disorder which is to be feared is the natural result of long years of reckless egoism in industry and politics, long years of silence or perhaps death of religion, long years of anarchical jealousy between nations, culminating inevitably in another war to end war. Men have become accustomed to recklessness: some have even been highly praised for it. Force has been loosed, and now can hardly be controlled by reason. The only hope is that the confusion will not strike too deep, for the new social order cannot arise in chaos.

A revolution, then, will not be secure from reaction unless chaos can be avoided; and it would be better to

[1] Louis Blanc, *l'Organisation du travail.*

wait a long time for the new order rather than risk everything by assisting to destroy the old in a general confusion. The new order must follow immediately on the old. There must be no interval. The ten o'clock train must run at ten o'clock on the day when the power is transferred from the old to the new Adam.

In the second place, the revolution must involve the devotion of intelligence to administrative organization. This will be denied by some who call themselves revolutionaries. Of these, a few dislike definiteness and very reasonably object to a new order because it is orderly; but these few may be comforted if the new order has interstices for the erratic, as we hope it will. A few others, however, who oppose administration believe sincerely that all men will go in the best direction if each goes as he will. The theory of pure anarchy is attractive: but its practice is so unlikely that it may be left undiscussed. If men are not to be isolated, there must be some arrangement as to their relations; but that arrangement need not be imposed: it may be spontaneous. The more subtle objections against organizing the new order are, however, not so important as the vague popular feeling that everything will come right if we destroy existing evils. The danger is that, having prepared the ground, the people may fall asleep; for the reorganizing of society requires vigilance not only against reactionaries, but against incompetent good intentions. It may be, however, that if the majority are sufficiently alive to desire a better social order, they will be vigorous enough to maintain it when it is introduced. These are, as it were, the first elements of the revolutionary ideal as it appears in history and in the expression of it by the great revolutionaries.

Revolution, therefore, is a sudden and radical transformation of society, affecting individual character, destroying social evil, and promoting mastership in the art of life, without being preceded by confusion or diminishing the need for social imagination and intelligence.

CHAPTER VII

FOR AND AGAINST REVOLUTION

THE true character of a sudden and radical change in social habit and organization is defined by reference to the new order which that change is intended to initiate. The bases, therefore, of that new order prescribe the general principles of revolution. Not any sudden and radical change is desirable, but only one which will lead to the establishment of social life upon new principles contrary to the conventionality, the private greed, the group egoism, and the sectional religiosity which govern the present world. Thus the principles of revolution are defined by the writers referred to above as follows: Rousseau stands for the principle of social organization based, not upon private wealth, but upon work: and with that is connected the principle of the simplicity of wants. The machinery of such a society will involve smaller units of government and federation between the units. Karl Marx adds the principle of co-operative production based upon common ownership; to which Mazzini adds the principle of duty or function as governing the relation of all the diverse groups of men. Morris, less exact in his reasoning but perhaps more vigorous in his vision, carried the economic into the artistic or creative sphere. He propounds the principle that production and consumption should be, not economic "forces," but forms of artistic impulse, involving creation and appreciation.

Finally, Tolstoi adds the principle of the governing forces in an ideal society or in the life of an ideal man, which will be a form of religion, identified by him with Christianity but distinguished from Ecclesiasticism.

A new order so imagined may be regarded by all as desirable ; but the method of reaching it may be conceived differently by different men. The writers referred to above all name their method " revolution," and their meaning has already been discussed. It remains necessary, however, to consider the argument for and against any such sudden and radical transformation of society : and for this purpose the arguments advanced by extremists on either side may be neglected. What is most powerful politically and most persuasive to the ordinary man is the sense of responsibility in the advocate of any political gospel. Unless the world goes mad, we are quite safe in the hands of " public opinion " against appeals of either incendiaries or military terrorists. It is not, of course, to be denied that the world does sometimes go mad : or at least the particular portion of the world which concerns us at the moment may go sufficiently mad to endanger our lives. But on the whole the violence of extremists may be neglected here, more especially as it cannot be met by appeals to reason. They are not men who will read or will reason with Marx and Tolstoi and those others with whom this book is concerned.

The more important arguments for or against revolution are advanced by those who are willing to consider calmly what it is that they desire and how to obtain it. On the side of revolution they are men who see the use of mild reforms but believe that this is not a time for reform ; and against revolution are those who admit the

existence of great evils but do not believe that rapid action would be effective.

In favour of revolution it is urged that the evils in society are so deep-seated that no amount of moderate reform will ever be effective. The very basis for all reform needs transformation. What is wrong is not this or that bad habit, this or that bad government, but all present social habit and the very essence of existing government. The time has come for a change as great as would be involved in taking the Sermon on the Mount seriously. The time has come to look to the very foundations of society, for in them is the flaw which has cracked the building.

This is an argument for the radical change in revolution, and to prove that the change must be rapid it is urged that the evils are extreme. Each generation is corroded by them. Reform is not speedy enough to overtake them: for social evil is not static, but is always growing with social organization. The desire that reform should be gradual is really a desire to preserve some of the evils to which we have grown accustomed; and compromise, as the very unrevolutionary Dicey said, is generally a name for preserving half of an evil when the whole might be abolished. Indeed, anyone who really feels the evil cannot be so patient with things as they are. The reformer is, no doubt, a benevolent person, but he is not himself a sufferer.

Again, it is urged that the pace of social change has naturally increased as a result of modern circumstances. Material and mechanical devices have made communication easier and solidarity more possible over wide areas. This has quickened the psychical life of society, and has made it possible for new ideas and new habits to spread

rapidly. We cannot, therefore, suppose that our best method of social change should be based upon the traditional experience of gradual reform. Indeed, the forces with which we are dealing in modern society are rapid in their action, and therefore any real transformation of those forces should be rapid. The very size of the administrative units in government and in industry makes rapidity of change essential if the change is to be radical: for otherwise the machine will not work while the radical changes are being introduced.

Again, it is said that there need be no fear of complete chaos. However complete the transformation in a revolution, man will still have two legs. The revolutionary does not fear the effects of revolution, because he has faith in men. The belief that all morality would be dissolved if old habits were changed was urged against every form of religious progress: and yet we have had religious disbelief and an absence from church without any noticeable moral degradation of society. Indeed, the church-goers have not always been the most virtuous members of society. In the same way social revolution would not destroy morality or kindliness in loosening the bonds of traditional habit, but would positively increase the moral stamina of the majority of men. If it were admitted that revolution was dangerous, the danger would be worth while as an opportunity for moral vitality, which cannot even be tested in the swaddling-clothes of uncriticized habit. But the further more deadly argument in favour of the risk in revolution is that what unsettles morality and human kindliness is not the new learning and the new habits, but the decay of the old. The trouble is that the established order is not, in fact, the bulwark of moral probity and the opportunity

for fineness of character which it is imagined to be by those who are afraid of a revolutionary change. The established order is, in fact, a rare opportunity for private greed, brutish lusts, and savage incompetence; and it is in the name of all that is best in man that a revolutionary change is advocated.

Again, it is said that the present social system is breaking down of itself. The choice is not between keeping it going and gradually changing it: the choice is between allowing it to disappear into chaos and attempting to provide a substitute. In this view the position of the industrial system to-day, for example, is like that of the German military system just before the armistice. It was too late for reform, too late to add a little benevolence in order to secure goodwill for the old firm. The only real alternatives were proved by events to be either complete social chaos or the substitution of a new form of government. It is not implied here that the new government of Germany constituted a social revolution: but in the same way industry is now too far gone to secure public confidence. The workers of the industrial world may still for some years bear with the existing situation, but they no longer believe that it is inevitable; their faith in the competence of their controllers is shaken, and they no longer fear the dangers with which they used to be threatened. They will not work as their forefathers did, because they do not love their work and they no longer fear the consequences of not working. Fear of starvation and premature death was one of the greatest forces for the maintenance of output in the industrial system: but the workers no longer fear them so much, because they are organized, and even those who should use the lash have lost heart. The public

and the employers—the powers that be, in fact—dare not because of their own souls use the goad which alone will make the old system work.

On the other hand, against revolution it is argued that, in fact, any radical and rapid transformation of society does unsettle more than is intended to be abolished. Granted that the evils in society are very great, a violent surgical operation on the body politic, generally without anæsthetics, produces incalculable results. The structure of habit is shaken when the forms of government are too rapidly altered : for habit changes slowly, and a new habit cannot suddenly grow up to replace the old habit which was closely connected with the institutions against which the revolution aims. If it is said that this need not occur—if, that is to say, the revolutionary believes moral habit to be sufficiently stable—then appeal may be made to past experience. In every actual revolution men have run riot : the violent have seized their opportunity : the ordinary man has been uncertain where to look or what to support. Hence come the bloodshed and destruction which, if this argument holds, are essential and not accidental in revolutions.

Again, it is argued that the alternative social order is not clear in all its elements : it is, therefore, unwise to attempt to introduce it all at once. The best political and social method must be gradual, chiefly because our purpose tends to be conceived differently as we approach its attainment more nearly. The first change may be greater than any hitherto connected with reform ; and yet it should be so limited as not universally to affect all social life.

Further, the only stable improvement in society is one based upon a change of mind or spirit : but mental

change among large numbers cannot be secured rapidly. Education is a growth, not a galvanism. It would be useless to introduce a perfect new order which was incomprehensible to those who were to benefit by it: for this would either compel the introducers to be despots, although benevolent, or would make their position insecure against the irritation of the ignorant. Social growth is like the growth of a tree, strongest if attained by a gradual increase.

Finally, the effort to secure a radical and rapid change gives an opportunity to reaction. The reactionary can excite the majority to support him if too much is attempted at once: he can make a bogey which is big enough to alarm the common man. But if, on the contrary, your method of change is gradual, the reactionary never has enough material for making a bogey. People will go out to kill anarchists, but not even to listen to Fabians. That may be all the better for Fabians, and it may be better also for society at large.

It is not possible, in the manner of a mediæval theologian, to assess exactly the comparative values of the arguments on either side. Probably their effect on different persons will be due rather to the temperament of those persons than to the inherent virtue of this or that argument: and the cumulative force of the arguments on either side will undoubtedly be dependent upon moods which change even in the same person. There are, besides, many other arguments which might be added.

The most important fact for the present purpose is that these arguments and the attitudes they indicate are being commonly used. The issue is appearing before

the minds of great numbers of men who are not what would usually be called thinkers. The most vigorous controversies in all countries are no longer what they were before the war. Details of reform are being put aside, and men are turning their chief attention to large and fundamental principles. For these reasons one may expect that social life is, in fact, being modified more rapidly, even though unconsciously, than most of us imagine. We cannot tell at what rate we are moving, because so many others are moving at the same rate: but there are indications that we are moving fast. When Columbus in his third voyage fell in with the calms of the central Atlantic he thought at first that he was not moving because the seaweed round his ship for many furlongs moved with the ship: but he saw in the night by the stars that his whole world was being moved by a current towards the west.

CHAPTER VIII

RELIGION AND REVOLUTION

PROBABLY it is only in the London parks on Sundays that religion and revolution are found together. In the parks there is not only a bodily juxtaposition, when the religionist and the revolutionary shout contradictions within hearing each of the other, but a spiritual rapprochement can be found there when the orator of the B.S.P. speaks of the coming of Socialism with the very phrases of early Christianity and the Salvationist stirs his followers with the thought of blood. In the past, religion has been thought revolutionary, and some hint of revolution may still be found in it. They should be thought of together as the two great enthusiasms which, together or apart, have transformed beasts into men; but the episodes of a London park on a Sunday are not typical of the actual relation of religion and revolution. In every country in the world the professed adherents of religion are the most convinced and earnest opponents of revolution; and in most countries the revolutionaries hate and despise what goes by the name of religion.

The problem, then, is to explain the antagonism of those who are governed by each of these enthusiasms, and from that explanation to derive a reasonable attitude and a plan of action, for the issues involved cannot be neglected with impunity. A revolution which neglects

religious passions or even religious organizations will end either in futility or in full reaction : religion which discounts the popular desire for radical social changes will die of inanition or become the plaything of imbeciles.

It is apparent that religion and revolution are opposed, and appearances in this case at least are not deceptive. It is possible for the religionist to say that not one of the prophets of revolution was an adherent of an established church. Marx and Morris may be counted by the orthodox as damnable and perhaps damned atheists ; and even Rousseau, Mazzini, and Tolstoi, all of whom professed to be deeply religious and indeed Christian, are not and were not in their own days, accepted as religious by the chief advocates of religion. Obviously the orthodox can prove that the revolutionary is ill at ease in the atmosphere of religion even if he does not altogether depart out of it.

On the other hand, the revolutionary, impatient at the little effect which lofty religious sentiments have had, can point effectively to the fact that no accepted and orthodox leader in religion has transformed the social circumstances of his time and country. Luther secured the belief in justification by faith, but he enslaved the German peoples to petty princes. St. Francis loved men, but left the rich to grind the faces of the poor. Wilberforce, a smaller man than these but typical of the minor religionism of England, put out a doctrine of submission which would have excused any revolution. In his *Practical View of Christianity* he says : Christianity " renders the inequalities of the social state less galling to the lower orders, whom she instructs to be diligent, humble, patient ; reminding them that their more lowly path has been allotted to them by the hand of God ; that it is their

part faithfully to discharge its duties and contentedly to bear its inconveniences; that the present state of things is very short; that the objects about which worldly men conflict so eagerly are not worth the contest; that the peace of mind which religion offers indiscriminately to all ranks affords more true satisfaction than all the expensive pleasures which are beyond the poor man's reach; that in this view the poor have the advantage; that, if their superiors enjoy more abundant comforts, they are also exposed to many temptations from which the inferior classes are happily exempted."[1] If that is a valid statement of the social effects of Christianity, Tolstoi must be speaking of some other religion; but Wilberforce, and not Tolstoi, represents the historical influence of established orthodoxy.

Thus chapter and verse can be found in history for proving that there is a natural opposition between religion and revolution.

The contrasts to be found in history are still to be found in our present society. Religion is now organized in churches and sects; and there is no church or sect which does not officially condemn revolution. The Roman Church under Leo XIII showed a tendency to approve of democratic movements, and the Encyclical of that Pope, called *Immortale Dei*, provided a cover for *rapprochement* between the Catholics and the French Republic. But even Leo XIII was very careful to teach the lower orders their duty of obedience to their

[1] *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System Contrasted with Real Christianity*, p. 255 in the 18th edition of 1830. The book was published in 1797. That there have been eighteen editions of it might be taken as a proof that there will never be a revolution in England.

masters; and the flirtations between clerics and liberals have come to an untimely end. The Russian Church, the other great religious atavism, was, according to the newspapers, enlisted in the service of Koltchak and Reaction. The Church of England, of its very nature an upper-class organization in dependence on the capitalistic state, has pronounced its ineffective horror at radical changes in society; and the various organizations of Protestantism, which during the war provided in Germany religious enthusiasm for a Kaiser's war, have kept an ominous silence on the enthusiasms of revolutionary Germany. Even the Society of Friends, some groups of which were able to protest against a popular war, is unable to pronounce in favour of a change which will destroy the profits on which its funds depend.

Organized religion may be condemned for all this; but the advocates of revolution are not secure from a similar criticism. In the preface to such criticism may be written Vauvenargues' saying—"Not all who scoff at auguries are wiser than those who believe in them"; for if we suppose that a radical transformation of society is desirable, why all the orthodox economics of the revolutionaries? It matters very little whether economic theory is a reflection of facts or a new theological myth for the satisfaction of those simple-minded persons who pride themselves on being "scientific." The fact is that the economic theory of revolutionaries is beside the point. The only motive force for revolution which could possibly be effective would be more absorbing than an economic want; but many of those who make the movement which we call revolution are blind to the greatest passions which stir the human race; since that they disagree with theological dogma would not matter much,

for those who believe the dogma are often ignorant of religion, but the revolutionary of the old rationalist school actually does not understand what religion is. He is like Comte in face of metaphysics; for as that worthy failed to understand what metaphysics dealt with, and therefore naturally thought it was almost nothing at all, so the old-fashioned rationalist thinks that dogma and ritual are almost nothing at all, since they have no bearing on what he understands. The neglect of religious organizations is another charge against the revolutionary; for even if religion itself is hateful, it is unreasonable to neglect the existence of the institutions and organizations to which it has given rise.

This apparently natural opposition between religion and revolution can be explained by a psychological account of the two attitudes involved. One of the characteristics of the religious attitude is that it is a facing towards the past. The saints and heroes are among the dead: the moral code and the very phrases of religious morality are ancient. We are born into them, and do not make them for ourselves. The Fathers appear to be more reverend than their future descendants.

In very early times the belief was common that an earlier was a happier and more virtuous age, for the Earthly Paradise is among the myths of nearly all religions; and the history of man is commonly conceived as a falling away from an original purity. But apart from myth or dogma, the past is undoubtedly active, and historical events and characters do actually play a great part in shaping the moral standards and exciting the emotions of the religious. This is psychologically to be explained by the fact that the past in memory has always a certain glamour. It is fixed and, in a sense,

perfect by contrast to the ever-changing present; and it has therefore the quality of eternity. The past surrounds us everywhere, while the present by contrast seems trivial and the future hypothetical.

In memory one's childhood seems to be a time of happy freedom; and the small pains of those days are forgotten. Again, when one is happy, the present moment seems enough; but when one is unhappy, seeking as it were a refuge, one finds it in the happy moments of the past, for no one goes back willingly to old sorrows; and thus the past comes to stand for happiness. That happiness now lost appears still more precious because it is lost. The experience of many coincides here, and thus a form of social myth arises applied to common life in the belief that childhood is a happy time; applied to politics and conversation in the praise of the good old times, the old leaders, the old school, and other such mythology; and in the great enthusiasms of religion applied to the whole universe in the creed concerning a Paradise and a Fall of Man.

This sense of the past induces reverence and acquiescence in the past, which is of such a character that it cannot be affected by any action of ours. Therefore the habit grows out of religion that one should cherish what is inherited and one should hesitate in doubt of the effectiveness of any action which might change it. Religion, in this sense and for no mean or trivial reason, is opposed to radical and rapid changes, and any revolution which neglected this common human feeling for the past is fated to end in a reaction. Thus the French Revolution introduced the worship of Reason, repudiated the old tradition, and brought on itself—de Maistre and Chateaubriand and the neo-Catholics.

Secondly, genuine religion has always implied a certain aloofness from everyday experience. True religion, it has been said, is to keep oneself unspotted from "the world"; and uncomplimentary references have been made to connections which are believed to exist between the world, the flesh, and the devil. In the purest form of religion the utmost condemnation is implied in saying that a man is "worldly"; and it is felt that true religion should make worldly success impossible. That is why the ordinary man so hates the religionist who makes money. But the religious attitude involves not only a moral aloofness; it implies also a view of life and the universe which explains this aloofness. The common life of every day is contrasted with another and better, for the sake of which men should live. The other world is not an empty dogma but a present reality to such men as St. Francis and St. Bernard, and perhaps to Calvin and Luther. It is not so much a place beyond the sky where men go after death as a company of saints watching the world and living as men might in their moments of ecstasy. To suppose, with the opponents of dogma, that there is only one world simplifies to the point of misrepresentation. It is as though one believed colour to be unreal because a camera does not record it; for there are in ordinary experience many worlds, as distinct as the earth and the moon. When the starving beggar on the road, falling asleep in despair, smiles in his sleep, he lives in another world; and not alone in sleep do men pass from world to world. Walking on the plainest of pavements on the most miserable quest of money or pleasure, a man may be seen to be as it were in a dream, thinking perhaps of lands he will never see or days he will never know: then, although his boots

click on the stones, he is in another world. The world of the skilled craftsman is different from that of the banker, the very language of the two worlds is different; and therefore no reasonable objection can be taken to the idea of another world, whatever may be said as to the evidence for its characteristics.

There is no doubt a kind of life or thought to be found within or beyond the daily commonplace which reduces to insignificance much that is commonly accepted as valuable or important. A man secure in that life is not easily enticed by wealth or fame or power; and religion often depends upon a sense of that other world. But in such a world the economics of the revolutionary are folly, and even the physical evils which undeniably exist appear to be trivial. Such facts as these may explain why religion appears to be opposed to revolution.

Revolution by contrast implies looking forward. Its life is impatience, while the life of religion seems often to be patience. Prudence, the cardinal virtue of religion, is the deadly sin of revolution: and so a modern poet can put into the very lips of Christ the lines:

> Now, Thomas, know thy sin. It was not fear:
> Easily may a man crouch down for fear,
> And rise up on firmer knees, and face
> The hailing storms of the world with graver courage:
> But prudence, prudence is the deadly sin,
> And one that groweth deep into a life
> With hardening roots that clutch about the breast.
> For this refuses faith in the unknown powers
> Within man's nature; shrewdly bringeth all
> Their inspiration of strange eagerness
> To a judgment bought by safe experience;
> Narrows desire into the scope of thought.
> But it is written in the heart of man,
> Thou shalt no larger be than thy desire.
> Thou must not therefore stoop thy spirit's sight

To pore only within the candle-gleam
Of conscious wit and reasonable brain;
But search into the sacred darkness lying
Outside the knowledge of thyself, the vast
Measureless fate, full of the power of stars,
The outer noiseless heavens of thy soul.
Keep thy desire closed in the room of light
The labouring fires of thy mind have made,
And thou shalt find the vision of thy spirit
Pitifully dazzled to so shrunk a ken,
There are no spacious puissances about it.
But send desire often forth to scan
The immense night which is thy greater soul;
Knowing the possible, see thou thy beyond it
Into impossible things, unlikely ends;
And thou shalt find thy knowledgeable desire
Grow large as all the regions of thy soul,
Whose firmament doth cover the whole of Being,
And of created purpose reach the ends.

This is an almost religious rendering of the best spirit of revolution as interpreted by the great writers from Rousseau to Tolstoi. The world for the revolutionary is an untried experiment. He feels that men do not know what is best, and can only discover it by audacity. For him the future holds the greatest men and the society most worthy of our efforts; and therefore he judges his actions and those of his contemporaries not by reference to the saints and heroes of the past, but by contrast with the unachieved social order in which men will at last be men indeed.

The earlier revolutionaries were moralists. They spoke of what ought to be, and were half doubtful whether it ever would come into existence. But the later revolutionaries believed that the coming of this world of their hope was inevitable; for they firmly believed not only that the better social order should exist, but that it would come into existence as part of the process of

evolution. To some of their critics this appeared to be a weakness in their argument, for why should one trouble to assist evolution, and why should one be impatient for what must inevitably follow the stern rules of necessity? Nevertheless, the argument for action held good, because the scientific revolutionaries argued that the evolutionary process could be made more speedy, and they very dimly have conceived a philosophical, or rather theological, paradox, as old as the days of the predestination controversy, that what is inevitable may be so only because our own will is part of the process and its desires are inevitable. The future thus becomes to the revolutionary as much present as the past is to the religionist.

Again, revolution is immersed in the immediate. Dreams of a paradise far off will not delay the man who knows that he wants to abolish quite definite and obvious evils. He sees the miserable houses and mean streets, and would make an end of these, building Jerusalem here, and leaving it to others to find a Jerusalem in heaven. He feels the enslavement of the poor, and would have them stand at their full height, free men. He hates the barren and desolating tyranny of the rich, and would topple them down at once without stopping to think whether anyone will pick them up. This appears to be as far as possible removed from the attitude of those who endure to live in an evil world for the sake of heaven after death. The belief in heaven has often been criticized by the revolutionaries because it was supposed to make idealists careless of actual present-day forces, and whether or not the charge is valid, the revolutionary is certain that what is here and now is the most worthy of attention. In the best form of this revolutionary

gospel the common things of the world are believed to be the actual stones of the City of God. The world is beautiful and full of wonder, more full, indeed, than our imagination can fill any heaven : the evil with which we contend is the disorder, the discord, obstructing what is natural ; and therefore the work of the true revolutionary appears to be not destructive but a removal of unessentials in order that life may be free to show itself for what it is. He works in mean streets for the gold that is there, not for an after-death in some other and alien sky.

Religionists, then, and revolutionaries—the best of them, not the worst—are opposed. They are moved by contradictory tendencies. They face different ways, and would take the world with them. In a sense they are irreconcilable. No reasonable man would attempt to reconcile opposites, for the world is so wide that opposites may exist without any reconciliation ; and there will always be some religious men who genuinely hate revolutions, and some revolutionaries who despise all forms of religion. The attempt to make every one admire every one else is bound to fail ; and indeed the world would not be even as pleasant as it is if every one agreed with all those he met and all men had feelings and thoughts of similar kinds in similar proportions. May Time and Space, gods of the metaphysicians, save us from being like our neighbours !

Religion and revolution are, after all, abstractions. The fact is that there are religious men and there are revolutionaries, and there are some men in whom the two forces contend. If the nature of these forces is such as described above, the attitude to be adopted is clearly one of acquiescence and interest : for we cannot afford

to shut our eyes to either, and there is nothing more plainly of importance at present than these two. But an attitude so adopted involves action ; for in such issues living men cannot be mere spectators. The task calls for hands. Enthusiasm is running to waste ; and men inspired by ideals are obstructing the very transformation which they desire, because their enthusiasm does violence to that of their fellows. What action, then, can be taken ?

The principle of action is based on the discovery that neither religion nor revolution are yet fully developed, and that the psychological attitudes described above should lead further. If revolution and religion are both driven to their logical conclusions, they are no longer in conflict, although they still continue to differ. Diverse men will be moved by each ; and in any one man who has experience of both, the divergent moods no longer contend, but each, as it were, inspires the other.

Religious enthusiasm may be redirected by the perception that, although the past is golden, it is dead. That which is called God is living, young-eyed—even, it may be, unborn ; for if man is not all he might be, then God is not ; and if the word " God " will not hold the meaning here intended, it will inevitably be repudiated by all who are genuinely moved by religion. " Ah, Zarathustra," said the old Pope, " I see that it is your piety which forbids you to believe in God !" But the living God of the religionist is not a mere personification of the Future of the revolutionary. He is all that is Past, gathered up and projected into a continually growing experience. He is, in fact, He that is to come—a second time.

As for the other world, if the conception is clearly developed it follows that we are divided from it not by

being alive, but by low intelligence and feeble emotions, blinding us to facts. It is in the recesses of the common and heavenly world of here and to-day that the other world lies. The enemies of true religion are not the atheists and agnostics, but those who, professing religion in whatever form—Christianity, Buddhism, Islam—have not so much as caught a glimpse of the light that never was on land or sea. Among these are the theologians, who argue about Virgin Birth and the Real Presence while women and children are tortured in the mills and the poor lack bread. Blind fools, hearing it said that the poor are blessed, have supposed that poverty was admirable or that the poor should be contented: but what really makes the poor blessed is the part of them that is not poor and not contented. That part is of the make of heaven. Such religion is revolution.

And now let the argument be of revolution. Of revolution many adverse things are said, few of them true and most of them irrelevant. If revolution will put up the cost of coal, what of it? The cost does not matter half so much as who gets the money; and can we not bear to pay ten shillings a ton for the liberty of other men! But a revolution which swept the past aside would be more barbarous than the tyranny it dethroned. What fool was it that said we should live for future generations, and implied in his conceit that his fathers had lived for him? This is indeed a folly of revolutionary Futurism. Each generation, each man, exists in his own right with his own blood and spirit; he does not borrow either, nor did his fathers lend him either. They had and kept their own; and therefore it would be a vile new world if men entering it forgot the blood and tears which found the sacred way. No

sane revolutionary can treat the world as though it should be abolished and entirely remade by his success. In this sense the past is not dead. The conclusion so argued will put hesitation upon the hands of revolution and perhaps a little silence on the lips of revolutionaries. It need not make cynics of revolutionaries, but the vision of the generations may perhaps reduce to their true comic stature the violences of those who would "uplift" us.

Again, it has been already shown that a real revolution cannot be based upon economics or even upon politics, but only upon a social idealism vaster than can be inspired by the desire for commodities or for laws. In fact, the revolutionary must believe in "another" world in order to establish a world worth having.

The perception that conclusions lead further than where the premisses stand has sometimes induced a belief in paradox. It has been felt that every obvious truth can be confronted with a contradiction equally true; and the habit of turning platitudes upside down has grown upon modern literature. But the argument so far outlined should not be thought to end in paradox. Religion is still one thing and revolution another; and they have each a world to conquer. Their development is not as pale and ghostly allies in a universal "uplift," but as diverse elements in a life somewhat fuller and more humane than ours. And since the subject here is chiefly revolution in its prelude, the conclusion of the piece stands thus:

Revolution will secure nothing but dust and ashes unless it digs deeper than any grievance. Whatever metaphor will least misrepresent the task of transformation, clearly the foundations are what matter most in

the new building ; the roots are where the Tree of Heaven springs to life. Therefore the immediate need is for a policy the reverse of superficial. Little Bills in Parliament, little strikes in Muddleborough, are all very well, and passion in the park may have its use ; but these are not of the blood and spirit which transform the world.

It is beyond the scope of this book to define in detail the policy which will lead to a radical improvement in social conditions and individual character. Probably that policy is complex and involves many different actions in the sphere of religion, politics, culture, and economics ; but the one purpose must be clear in all the details and the method. The ideal is not merely a new organization of society, but a finer type of individual character. The great man is he to whom his fellows owe their happiness, and their happiness is their ability themselves to make others happy. The hero is obsolete. The saint is perhaps somewhat faded. We need a new ideal man ; for ultimately our policy will depend upon the sort of person whom we desire to see in existence, and not simply on a plan for bettering the lives of such persons as ourselves.

In regard to social organization, on the other hand, the fundamental need is an ability to see the social effects of our actions. We must see not only the happiness of the person who wears a fine dress, but the miseries of those who made it, not merely the outward calm of our city life, but the oppression on which it depends, and we must be able to feel such evils not merely out of sympathy but as an offence. Out of that perception a social ideal arises as a vision of a new order in which all men have freedom. The enthusiasm which may result and may inspire action, if it is to cause any radical better-

ment of human life and character, will be much more correctly described as religious than as revolutionary, unless at that stage the two words are almost equivalent in meaning. Therefore the most important element in the influence of the great revolutionaries is their religious or quasi-religious enthusiasm, and not their economic theory ; and therefore one of the chief tasks of the moment is to keep the vision of the ideal in the midst of all the economies and politics by which it may be realized. The new social order has long been hoped for, and those who were its prophets have died without seeing their promised land ; but past failure is not a proof that success is impossible, and perhaps the world is now ready for a great experiment.

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